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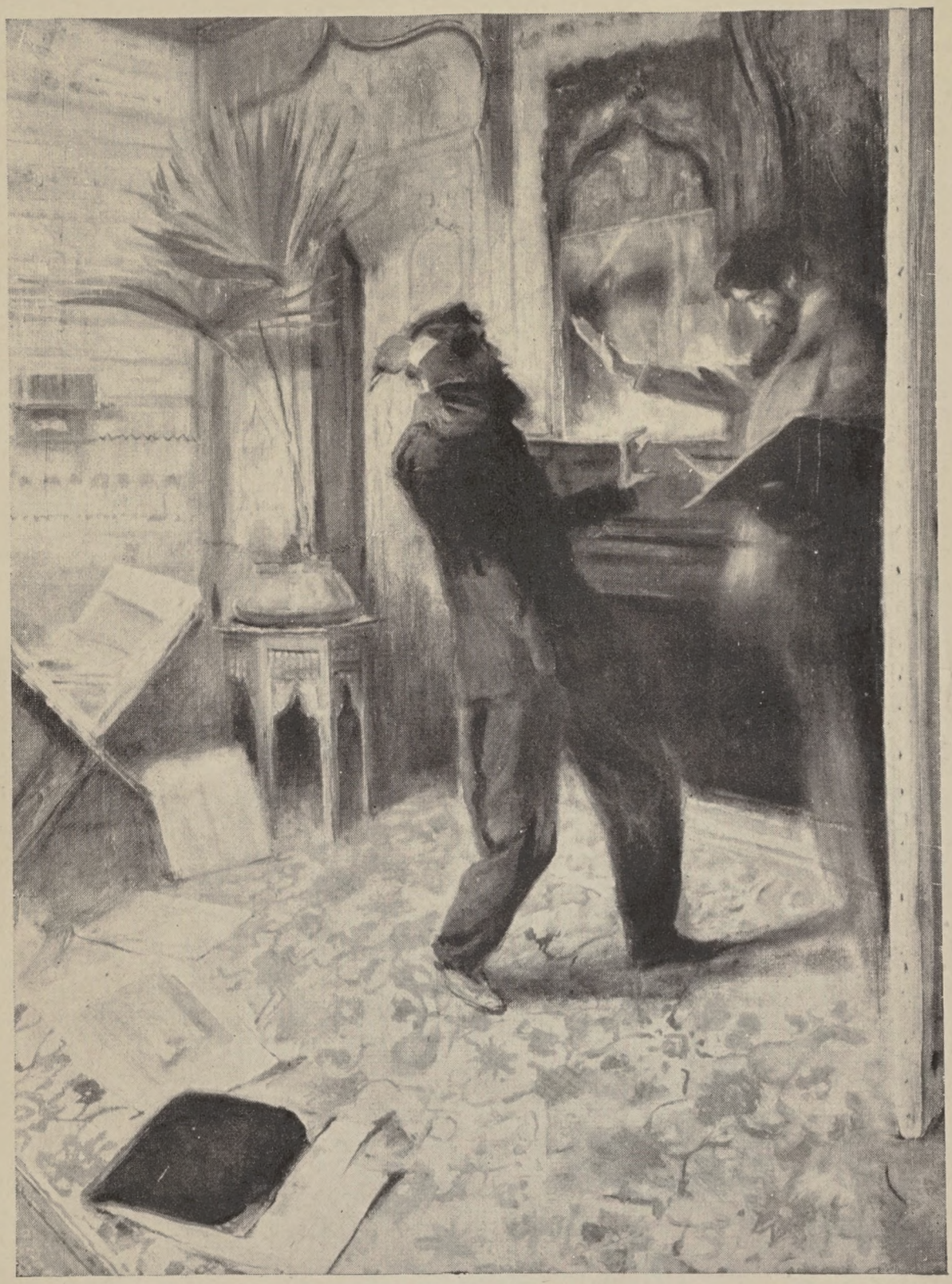
WHICH IS MY HUSBAND?



"'Why, yes, I have every right,' he said, raising the palette knife."

[Page 186.]

WHICH IS MY HUSBAND?

BY

JULES CLARETIE

OF THE ACADÉMIE FRANÇAISE

TRANSLATED BY

MARY J. SAFFORD

ILLUSTRATED

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DEDICATION

WOULD you like romances of a new kind, my dear Madame? Wonderful romances, in which the truest incidents appear the most improbable? Open the books in which the scientists relate what goes on in the human brain.

A sound mind or heart must be in a sound body. The most astonishing journey, the one that surpasses in discoveries all the volumes of the explorers and the works of the inventors of aeroplanes, is the journey around the human body. And you may be sure that all the incredible things which people tell you about human beings with two personalities, and about the wonderful discoveries concerning the third eye which is lacking in the modern man, are scientifically true. Science is in pursuit of the impossible. It will attain it.

Meanwhile, Romance sees, foresees, announces, prophesies. And it is the right of Romance to divine and foretell the future, especially when its divinations or its researches rest upon facts.

So read this book, in which the dream is made of positive fact, and the romance of eternal truth.

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PART FIRST

I

DR. CHARDIN

Several patients, who had come at the consultation hour, were waiting in Dr. Chardin's large parlor on the Boulevard Haussmann. Buried in armchairs, impatient, sullen, or timid, they maintained the bored silence of prisoners brought to a judge's anteroom. Two sad-looking old ladies had brought a wan little boy whom they scolded gently when he coughed. A pretty young woman, evidently nervous, feverishly turned over the leaves of magazines and illustrated books lying on the table. There was a fat man with a puffy, apoplectic face, and, in one corner, with his legs crossed and his hat on his knees, a thin young man, of fashionable and refined appearance, whose eyes roved from the paintings on the wall to the trees in the street, whose yellow leaves and half-stripped branches could be seen through the windows.

Occasionally the door from the parlor into the doctor's office opened, and a tall, thin man in a black frock coat appeared on the threshold. A pointed

head was seen above a lean, full-shaven face; the tall, slender body made a beckoning gesture, mechanical as the movement of a semaphore, one of the patients rose and disappeared into the doctor's office, and the door closed noiselessly upon some confidence or affliction.

The young man, who was the last comer, was thinking that this long waiting in the doctor's parlor resembled other halting places of misery in our daily lives. The eyes of the patients rested with a sort of jealous anger on the others who were to enter before them. One would have said that those whom the doctor summoned were the spoiled children of fate, who were taking time and life from the others. The young woman restlessly opened and shut again the bindings of the well-thumbed books, which had been handled by many fingers, while the tips of her little feet beat a tune upon the carpet.

"What's the use of being in a hurry?" said a neighbor to the young man. "Everybody gets there in his turn."

Yet this philosopher, a middle-aged army officer, had but one idea, to avoid leaning back in the armchair in which he sat, in order to escape contact with its back. He sat very erect on the edge, regarding with a sort of pity those who let their heads touch against their chairs. When his hand grazed the arm

he quickly wiped it. "They don't know," he said to himself. "They might catch the disease that makes you bald. Ah, disease is everywhere. You may say indeed that the microbes watch us. A speck of dust inhaled is perhaps the entrance of death." And he kept repeating, "Why hurry? One always arrives."

The doctor's waiting-room gradually became empty. The two ladies in mourning had taken in the little child, the apoplectic man had rushed towards the door, and—after the one who had worried about microbes—the stylish and charming young woman, drawing her fur stole gracefully around her shoulders, had entered the office, smiling and brave, as if she were going to meet her sweetheart. The young man, left alone before the canvases which had such an attraction for him, moving from a Diaz to a Ziem, awaited his turn; while the servant, opening the door which led into the room, occasionally introduced new patients, who took the places of those who had gone in before.

Dr. Chardin's office hours were always crowded. This bold innovator was already as famous abroad as in Paris, and was perhaps even more appreciated in America and in Russia for his works on nervous diseases and the life of the brain. But he was not content with this specialty, wide and far-reaching though it was. He followed up at the same time

active researches in the most different directions, proceeding on the belief that only the big ideas and principles matter, and that the man of to-day ought to know everything and try to define everything about the entire universe. People told wonderful tales of Dr. Chardin, as of a sort of legendary being —tales of unhoped-for cures, made without noise or announcement in the papers. He had discovered the marvels of liquid air; he had penetrated the secrets of the human body with rays of light almost at the same time as Roentgen; he had perfected Firsen's apparatus for curing lupus by light, finding recovery in the famous red room where other rays devoured and carried off skin diseases. The scientific world was deeply interested in Chardin's researches into the curative properties of Curie's radium. But the doctor, who did not belong to any school, admitted no visitor or witness into his laboratory at Montrouge, avoiding reporters as other people sought them.

While the young man was watching the passers-by, the parlor filled again with new patients. The office door opened, the doctor's bald head appeared, the long, thin arm made a beckoning gesture, and the young man entered.

Before an immense desk covered with papers and books, with Japanese bronze crabs for paper weights,

Dr. Chardin, whose pale, impassive face, with its big features, suggested a head carved from the meat of an immense nut, rested his elbows on the blotting pad, while his gaze bored to the inmost soul of the man before him. His gray eye, keen and sharp as a needle, became uncomfortable for the man who was enduring his glance. It was a sort of human ray as penetrating as a cathode one. The young man, whose dark eyes lighted up a wan face framed by a black beard, examined with anxious curiosity this man whose look searched and explored his mind like a probe.

"Well, sir, will you kindly explain to me your condition as briefly as possible? The trouble is evidently some nervous ailment."

The patient was a tall, well-made, fine-looking fellow, who did not look in the least like an invalid, and it needed the doctor's trained eye to perceive the invisible defect.

"Yes, Doctor," said he, a little disconcerted, "and a very unusual one. But you have a great many people in your waiting-room, and I fear that my story will be long. On the other hand, you will see presently that I cannot defer my visit, and that you cannot put off your decision to another day. I will ask you to be so kind as to hear me with patience. The others— "

"You have come in your turn, sir. The others will wait for theirs. What is the matter with you?"

"As I have told you, Doctor, it is a very strange trouble. Anyone except you would take me for a lunatic, and would learnedly demonstrate my insanity. I am ill, undoubtedly; but—you may subject me to all the tests you like—I am not a madman. You will tell me that all lunatics assert that their minds are perfectly sound. I do not say that in regard to myself, please observe. On the contrary, there is a lesion in me. I have come to put my case before you, not asking you to cure me instantly, but first to advise and afterwards to cure me."

"I am listening," said Dr. Chardin, whose gray eyes never left the dark ones of the speaker.

"First of all, Doctor, you should know who I am. Here is my card."

"André Fortis. The artist?"

"The artist."

The doctor smiled—and the coming of the unexpected smile on his frigid face was charming. Then he added a rapid, graphic, and just comment upon the beautiful, mournful landscapes exhibited by Fortis at the last Salon, and went on gently:

"Your canvases certainly proceed from a vision that knows how to seize, and an art which knows how to express. You are a poet; but, judging by

your work, your brain is perfectly formed. I won't say as much for all your brethren. Let us proceed."

"Doctor," said André, smiling in response, "since your preliminary impression is so favorable, it puts me more at ease in making a confession, which, I hope, in spite of its singularity, will not change your diagnosis. I have told you that I am not mad. But my morbid condition renders me as unfortunate as if I were. I am a being whose personality at certain hours, and for a considerable length of time, is doubled."

"You mean—?"

"I mean that suddenly, at the moment I am least expecting it, while walking, talking, working, in the studio, or at table, a longing for sleep seizes upon me; I fall into a slumber without any cause, and I then become—you are not going to believe me—yes, I become a different man, a totally different man, a man whose life is unlike the first one's, who has his own opinions, his own ideas, his own thoughts—which are not mine—a man who exists within me and who cuts into my usual life to begin and continue another existence, suddenly, unexpectedly, almost destructively. So in this second life, which gives me in reality a second consciousness, I am entirely unlike my usual self, and living necessarily with the same people, keeping the same body, the same voice, the

same movements, I must evidently appear to them incomprehensible and abnormal, since this double life transforms me into two persons contained in a single man. Bear in mind, Doctor, that I should never even have been able to understand my condition, since I remember my second life only when the sleep surprises me, if an old family friend who died six months ago, Dr. Burke—"

"I knew him. He was an excellent man."

"If Dr. Burke had not explained what took place within me, and how a sudden sleep might throw me into another existence utterly different from my own, leaving me to return to the first one without even having, I repeat, any recollection of what I have done, said, or thought during the second state—Isn't second state what you call that sort of incredible somnambulism which takes possession of me and, for a certain time, makes me no longer myself? I am *He*, a being whom I do not know, who is not I, but *The Other?*"

II

TWO LIVES IN ONE

THE physician kept his eyes fixed on the young man, and seemed to be studying his gestures, the tone of his voice, and the varying expression of his face, which, just now quite composed, seemed gradually to grow anxious, and then wrathful, as if a third person had introduced himself between these two men, and Fortis, divining the intrusion, was irritated by it.

"I am convinced, Doctor, that you believe me perfectly insane."

"No," said the physician; "but you are ill, and you have just described a very extraordinary case."

"Unique," said the artist, vehemently, "yes, unique."

Dr. Chardin shook his head, smiling.

"That's an instance of human vanity. It is found even among the sick. Especially among the sick. Nothing in Nature is unique, sir. Everything has a precedent. Science knows few, and has noted and studied only five or six cases identical or comparable

with yours; but this matter of the double consciousness and the dividing of the personality is well known, even classic. I regret to deprive you of an illusion, but you have had predecessors. One famous case which was observed and reported is in all the works on physiology and psychology, the story of Felida."

"Felida?"

"You do not know it? If you open a book about hypnotism—and I advise you not to do so in your present nervous condition—you will find related at length, repeated, examined, the story of the young woman in Bordeaux who lived two existences in one. She had a husband and children, and lived a double life. She was sad while she led one of her two lives, gay when she returned to the other, to the amazement of the scientists who had her under observation. A charming, highly learned man, a Professor in the Faculty of Medicine of Bordeaux, whom I can still see on one of his visits to La Salpêtrière, slight, thoughtful, modest, conversing well, listening still better—Doctor Azam, who has studied deeply into hypnotism—has signed his name to this extraordinary observation of Felida. Felida was a hysterical person. Don't take the word in the meaning commonly given. You are nervous, and nervousness is the hysteria of men. If the phenomena which you describe to me are correct—your precision indicates

that they are—you are a masculine Felida. How old are you?''

''Twenty-nine.''

''Have you any relative of eccentric character among your ancestors? Think carefully.''

''Not one,'' replied the artist.

''At what age did your father die?''

''Sixty-four. He was a robust man. A cold caught in coming out of the theater carried him off.''

''Your mother?''

''My mother died young. I scarcely knew her. A smiling face, a crayon portrait by Chaplin, are all that is left me of her.''

''And is there nothing in the family traditions that recalls to you any unusual person?''

''Nothing.''

''Yet there must be some ancestor to whom you owe this neurosis. In us always lives or relives some unknown ancestor who reappears and imposes upon us his defects or bestows his genius. Did you have any shock, or fright, during your childhood?''

''None,'' the young man replied.

''Search your memory well.''

''It is useless to try to remember, Doctor. I evoke nothing, I recall nothing.''

''Well, causes do not remove effects. And it is the effects which must be combated.''

André Fortis looked the physician steadily in the face, then, after seeming to hesitate a moment:

"Combated, agreed. But," he said slowly, "cured? Can there be a cure?"

"There can always be a cure," said Dr. Chardin, positively.

"But Felida? That Felida whom Dr.—"

"Azam!"

"But Felida? Has she been cured?"

"She has lived, I tell you. She has been a wife, a mother, and perhaps is living still."

"Cured?" André repeated, emphasizing the word.

"People can always be ill again," answered the physician, in the same firm tone in which he had spoken of the cure.

An abrupt gesture from the young man accented the reply.

"I have not the right to be ill again, Doctor."

"Why?"

"Ah! why? why? I am to be married to-morrow. That's the trouble."

There was an expression of such wild excitement in the artist's eyes, that the physician, until now observing a neuropathic patient, wondered if he might not be in the presence of a lunatic. But with singular precision, as if he were answering the doctor's

mute anxiety, nay, his very thought, the young man hastened to repeat:

"Once more, do not think me wholly mad. Troubled, yes; alarmed, yes; apparently forced toward an abyss, striving to draw back, and unable to do so, yes. This is why I have come to consult you, to confess, in a fashion, as I have told you. As to having my full reason, I possess it entirely; I am really *I;* and besides, for a long time, I have reconquered this personality, and that is what has enabled me to begin, without remorse, the love romance which will end, or which should end, to-morrow by a marriage. I worship the young girl who will be my wife. She loves me. I have an independent fortune, and my brush would make me almost rich, if I were harassed by the necessity for working. We have every chance of happiness before us, but on one condition, that this dividing of my personality does not render impossible, absolutely impossible, the new existence which I am going to create, and which will be my salvation. In short, if this other Ego who is not I—really, Doctor, it seems as if I were talking like Sosia in Molière's "Amphitryon"—does not throw himself across my life, my joys, my fireside, and change into a hell what ought to be for me the most delightful, the most ardently desired refuge."

André stopped, anxiously questioning Dr. Chardin's keen eyes. He was like a man awaiting the sentence of a judge.

Before pronouncing it, the physician asked farther questions:

"In what way does this second state into which you enter begin? Is there any indication or sensation—what we term the *aura*—that warns you of its approach?"

"Yes. Didn't I tell you? Generally a sort of lightning flash, a luminous and persistent zigzag line, passes before my eyes; objects appear either striped with light or encircled like an aureole, a halo—or else there is a sudden drowsiness, an invincible desire to sleep, a heaviness of brain which is not disagreeable, no, on the contrary, pleasant, attractive, as though something sweet and happy was buried in the darkness. Then I emerge from this vague half slumber or these dazzling lights to find myself again, to awaken, no doubt, in this second state and become the other person, to put on, if I can express myself in that way, the livery and the ideas of another, to be *The Other,* and to continue, in this state, the new existence which has nothing in common with the former one. But I have already told you this. I beg your pardon, it is the obsession."

"Is it a considerable time since you have been in this second state?"

"Yes, Doctor, yes. Two years. And Dr. Burke even assured me that I was cured."

"He was right. In such a case the suggestion is very powerful. Besides, Burke might perfectly well tell the truth. It is very possible that you are cured —very possible."

A ray of light flashed into André Fortis's eyes, which were riveted upon the physician's.

"Then, Doctor, this marriage? This marriage is to take place to-morrow—"

"Well?" said Chardin coldly.

"There is no objection to it? I have no reason to fear that a sort of phantom will interpose between me and my happiness, take my place, and expel me in a way from my own existence?"

"I must above all tell you, and repeat to you, sir, that what you fear is not possible. You must be penetrated, saturated with this belief. You must drive away all anxiety. You must persuade yourself that you have been dreaming, and that the nightmare is gone. You understand, persuade yourself thoroughly, absolutely. You come to consult me at a peried in your life when it is difficult to draw back. It is to-morrow—you said to-morrow?"

"To-morrow at eleven o'clock at the office in the second ward. At noon at Saint-Roch."

The doctor remained thoughtful, pondering, hesitating, biting his lips. He had divined the grief of this soul in distress, the bewilderment of this spirit. He felt that he was confronting an inscrutable mystery.

Master of a human destiny, he had the power over life and death. One word, one single word would become a sentence.

"To-morrow?" he said. "And this young girl loves you?"

"Deeply, I am sure of it, as I love her myself."

Then the physician slowly pronounced the words:

"Good Heavens, sir, if you had come to consult me two months ago, I should have advised you to reflect, I should have placed you under observation, and my opinion would soon have been definite. But you come at the hour when the happiness and also the reputation of a young girl are at stake, to question me, while stating that your own physician, who has studied and cared for you, pronounced you cured. You embarrass me. Were you engaged when Dr. Burke died?"

"No."

"Did he have your confidence when your love for the young girl whom you are to marry began?"

"Yes, Doctor. And as I expressed my grief, a very natural anguish, I have told you that he reassured me. A regular life, a deep affection, a profession that I love—he firmly believed that I could brave the future, and that the past, the detestable past, was in truth the past."

"I wish it may be so," said Dr. Chardin.

Then, seeing that André Fortis had turned slightly pale, he added very quickly:

"And I believe it, since he said so. Dr. Burke was no ordinary physician."

"Then?" asked the artist, whose voice choked as he put the question.

"Then between the certain scandal, from which some irreparable misfortune may spring—"

"That is also certain, Doctor. Yes, if you tell me not to marry to-morrow, I shall return home, write my farewell letter, and kill myself."

"That would be an absurdity," said the physician. "But it is the follies which are always most eagerly committed in life. I was saying to you that between a misfortune—and this folly would be one which might perhaps open the door to many others—between a misfortune and a risk, or, what is better, a hope, the least tragical solution should be chosen. You will give me your address. Whatever may happen, you will return to see me, and you will be able,

if necessary, to jot down on paper for me—for me alone, of course—your sensations, your anxieties, if you have any, if you foresee the awakening of that *Other,* as you call him. If he reappears in your life, which I do not believe—you hear, look at me—" and the doctor plunged his gaze like a bistoury into the young man's eyes—"which I do not believe"—he emphasized the words imperatively, dictated them like an order—"which I do not believe, you will hasten at once to inform me! And we shall be masters of the situation!"

"Really?" said André Fortis, as if the words were a cry of deliverance.

"Really!" said Dr. Chardin firmly.

"Ah! Doctor, Doctor, Doctor! You are saving my life!"

"I am convinced of it. You are capable of having already loaded your revolver."

The artist burst into a little nervous laugh and, as if startled—not by his act, but by having it thus correctly divined—said:

"Yes, it is true! What can you expect? I worship my fiancée. To lose her seems impossible. I cannot resign myself to it. What is a bit of lead in the brain?"

"Be certain that that is not a remedy," said Dr. Chardin.

He had risen, holding out his hand to the young man:

"Come! And have confidence!"

"And thank you, Doctor!"

Then as Fortis made a movement to place the physician's fee on a corner of the desk, Dr. Chardin stopped him:

"No, no. Later. The point in question here is a cure. We will arrange that when I tell you it is accomplished. And it is you, yes, you, at the proper hour, who will tell me so."

"Ah! Doctor!" cried the young man, "there is someone worthy of higher admiration than the artist who sells the illusion of color and scenes; it is the man of science who bestows happiness."

"Well, then," said the physician, "I will retain the title, dealer in happiness. Come, I wish you happiness, Monsieur Fortis. And say to yourself: 'I am happy,' as you will repeat: 'I am cured.' To believe ourselves what we wish to be is perhaps the only certain way of having what we desire."

André Fortis ran lightly down the doctor's steps, and made his heels ring merrily on the pavement. He walked erect, his head held high, inhaling deep draughts of air. Life seemed brighter, or rather became possible. The dry leaves that had fallen from the plane trees whirled rapidly before him, like mes-

sengers of joy. At the edge of the horizon, amid the pearl gray tint of November, there were bits of blue sky, the tender blue of Correggio, which opened like women's eyes. Sunshine appeared, then vanished, glowing on the slate roofs and the tall white houses. The air was very mild and spring-like, one of those periods in the melancholy summer of Saint-Martin, when landscapes and persons possess the enjoyment, though already impaired, of things which are about to die.

To André Fortis, on the contrary, it was a joy just beginning. Two hours before, he had anxiously entered the elevator which was to convey him to Dr. Chardin's apartment; now, the consultation over, he descended, treading with the steps of a victorious conqueror or a liberated prisoner.

Life seemed to him beautiful, the passers-by appeared joyous. Shakespeare standing on his pedestal —Shakespeare, the poet of deep passions and woeful follies—seemed to say: "Cast far from you the Doubt that kills, repeat to yourself the opposite of Hamlet's words: *Hope and live!*"

Live? The artist only asked to live. The blood of youth was throbbing hotly in his veins. The visions of Art gave him beautiful dreams. Landscapes were to him like living poetry, which he fixed upon canvas with the joy of a creator; springs smil-

ing with all their whiteness, or the tears of autumn with their showers of golden leaves. What! He had a future of glory before him, and suddenly, gliding into his personality like a thief in the night, another, *The Other,* would come to snatch from him all his dreams, substitute new thoughts for his own ideas, stop the life which was opening triumphantly, happily. A stranger slipped within him and became himself. André put on like a costume a new personality, and in this costume felt stifled, bewildered, as if cased in a suit of iron armor, too tight and too heavy to wear.

Dr. Chardin had just told him that the intruder's yoke could be shaken off, this moral armor, as weighty as the instruments of torture in which patients were enclosed in former days, could be broken! The physician, in a word, had restored to the despairing man that excuse for living—hope! André Fortis, in a joyous mood, was mentally thanking the sky, the trees, the leaves, the entire framework of his happiness, associating them with this intoxication of the escaped convict.

Yes, if Chardin's verdict had been different, he had resolved to die. Rather than write to Mademoiselle de Jandrieu that he renounced, for unaccountable reasons, the honor and joy of marrying her, he would have lodged a bullet in his head. This was not the

impulsive temptation of the suicide, it was a resolution formed after reflection, the mature deed of a man who does not know how to escape from a false position. And, thank God, he was coming out of it very naturally! The young girl whom he loved would become his wife on the morrow, and Dr. Chardin, like Dr. Burke, had said that *The Other* could be driven away, expelled, confined, or nailed to the threshold of the happy home like an importunate guest or a bird of evil omen.

Marry Mademoiselle de Jandrieu! It was the union André desired. A romance which, in its tenderness, would have been the simplest and most commonplace in the world, if the fear of the frightful future had not crouched in the background, like a living sorrow seated by the fireside. André Fortis had met Mademoiselle de Jandrieu at Trouville. A friend presented him to the parents; the father, an elderly gentleman, a retired general, who had formerly been wealthy, but whose estates, with their ravaged vines, no longer produced their former income; the mother, a charming, ever smiling woman, shy and religious, who worshiped her only daughter, and had trained her soul. The accident of walks, proximity at table, games of tennis, conversations, then the sort of seashore intimacy succeeding the bows and shaking of hands on the board walk had gradu-

ally drawn the two young people together; and these meetings, under the eyes of Monsieur and Madame de Jandrieu, gave rise to a deep and sincere affection.

Nevertheless, André had maintained an absolute discretion in his relations, and the uneasiness caused by his condition imposed an anxious reserve. Yet, as if Mademoiselle de Jandrieu's influence had been specially tranquilizing, very soothing, he had never experienced near her—an extraordinary thing—any of the pangs that had formerly gripped him, any dread of the coming of *The Other*. The frank, clear gaze of Cécile de Jandrieu gave him the sensation of a limpid lake, whose depths he could have seen. He compared it with the blue waves of Lake Geneva, on which the young girl's thoughts (he smiled at the notion) floated like swans.

She was tall, slender, pretty, very fair, with a little nose, pink ears, and the languid grace of an English girl. Her mother was Irish. Gifted with the soul of an artist, a musician, she was also a painter—oh! quite without pretension—and this taste, a passion for water colors, had attracted her to Fortis. She had particularly admired in the last Salon the Stream des Vaux de Cernay, into which the landscape artist had put so deep an expression of melancholy, the water dashing amid the rocks, the mournful trees, like life amid daily hardships. At least Cécile had seen this

in the canvas. We perceive in a landscape chiefly what we have within us.

Though somewhat shy, like her mother, Mademoiselle de Jandrieu had shown her water colors to Fortis. More than an amateur's talent was apparent in these studies of the seashore; varied sketches of a bit of the strand or of cities—according to the chance of travel—the solitudes of Port-Royal, the deserts of la Crau, the country of Mireille, the canals of Venice, the ideal land of Ziem. And while criticizing the young girl's pictures, like a professor correcting and praising in a studio, André Fortis exchanged with her the ideas, memories, sensations experienced while gazing at these visions here realized, some sunset on the lagoon, some gray olive wood in Provence.

Nature and what she inspires is like a touchstone which attracts souls. It was discovered that the two young people had ideas in common upon many subjects, and that often the same landscapes, the same hours of the day, brilliant or sad, had inspired the same reflections in these two human beings who did not yet know each other. In this place she had thought what he himself had thought in that same spot. It was perfectly simple, and that seemed strange to them. At once strange and charming.

Sympathy thus began. Mademoiselle de Jandrieu found in the artist a sort of delightful guide, new

ideas which interested her, the fraternity of admiration which leads to tender confidence. With André it was love—a love composed of radiant joy and disquietude. For it was vain to tell himself that these apparitions of an unknown being in his life, this dividing of his personality which had seized him repeatedly in his existence, belonged entirely to the past. The memory and apprehension of this strange neurosis returned to him, not distinctly, but with the vague, troublesome images that beset you after awaking, when the nightmare still leaves the mind affected, as a bad meal leaves a bitter taste in the mouth.

He recalled the first attack of this peculiar malady. It happened when he was a boy of fifteen, on some holiday, on leaving a concert in which the maledictions of Schumann's "Manfred," the demoniacal or divine voices of the Byronic score, had excited his nerves, his superficial emotion. He felt a pain in his temples, dazzling flashes of light passed before his eyes. Benumbed, half asleep, he followed his companions without saying a word, then, after a few minutes of this drowsiness, his lashes lifted, a totally different expression flamed in his eyes, and he made remarks to his friends that amazed them, wholly unlike those of the morning, the previous hour. He had in truth become a different person, really and visibly

a different person. And his father, who was then living, called in Professor Charcot, then Dr. Adam Burke, an old friend of the family, and asked them:

"Is my son insane?"

He was not insane. The attack ended after a few days, and André became himself again. The physicians had both pronounced the same name, diagnosed the same affection. It was the case just recalled to Fortis by Dr. Chardin. The double consciousness of Felida, coming from a double existence, normally or in the second state—the phrase was Dr. Azam's—this double consciousness also divided the personality, the body, and the brain of André.

There was—without any mental malady—a singular, incredible halving, which interested Charcot, and which Burke tried to cure. The physician even firmly believed that he *had* cured him, and Monsieur Fortis, the father, had the consolation of dying with the assurance of knowing that his son was delivered from this menace when, at the age of manhood, André relapsed three times into the grasp of the malady. Three times he had felt his temples pressed, seen the preliminary flashes of light before his eyes, experienced the almost agreeable drowsiness, enveloping, lulling, which drew him, made him, as it were, glide into slumber.

Three times he had been "another," living an unforeseen life under the same name and with the same face. Yes, this fantastic phenomenon was produced. André, to avoid the eyes of his friends, took a journey to Italy, carrying his box of colors and his brushes, and in a species of somnambulism, continuing his dream for months, he made notes, sketches, finished pictures in this abnormal condition whose existence no traveling companion, no museum guide, no stranger could suspect. His intelligence, speech, reasoning—but it was a new reasoning very unlike the artist's usual opinions—remained perfectly intact.

And this was the result produced, a result, which might appear incredible, cause people to cry out against folly or mystification, if science was not present to affirm the reality even of the mysterious, and to prove the improbable. André Fortis, awakened from this sort of annihilating dream, read in his notebooks, found in his portfolios, saw on his canvases thoughts, notations, landscapes which were his, pictures and ideas born of his reflections and his labor, yet which he did not know.

Everything that he had thought, sought, found during these interludes of his personality, filled him with astonishment, dazed him.

For—omnipotent nature has these ironies—nothing could be more different than the art and the reflec-

tions of André Fortis during the distinct periods of his double life. *The Other* was extravagant, carried away by every novelty, variable, and in constant excitement. The somewhat melancholy gentleness of the young man, on the contrary, was the charm of his gestures, his voice, his glance.

It was this very gentleness which had slowly attracted Mademoiselle de Jandrieu, inspired confidence in the general and her mother, a gentleness that seemed to have become the very character, the only mood of the young artist, a gentleness that was found shading, like a light, silvery mist, his usual works, peaceful visions which sometimes, without imitation or effort, rivaled the tranquil evening of the villages, the plains, the hills of Cazin. The sadness André felt while thinking of his condition, of the menace of this confiscation of his personality by another, was melted—a layer of snow hiding the sweetness of primroses—beneath the gaze and the influence of the young girl.

At first timid and hesitating, André had allowed himself to pass into confidence. He no longer hoped, going through life like a man threatened with being forced, from time to time, to enter a prison. And a chance meeting in summer, a child's smile, the caress of a woman's voice, restored a little trust. He went hurriedly to consult Dr. Burke.

"Can I be married? Am I insane?"

"You are not insane. You are a sick man, my dear boy. And, the second condition through which you have passed no longer reappearing, you are a cured man."

"Cured? You would affirm it? You will swear it?"

"I do not swear. I believe. I believe it firmly. And especially I order you to believe. You are you. Your personality belongs to you. You are free."

This was somewhat like the prescription, the command of Dr. Chardin.

"Free to love, to succeed, to be a husband, a father?" asked André.

"Free to control your destiny," Dr. Burke had replied in the full plenitude of his conscience and his confidence.

Then André had given himself up without resistance to his love for Cécile. It really seemed to him that henceforth nothing could disturb his tranquillity, destroy his happiness. He felt young, full of health, full of confidence, smiling at the future. Dr. Burke's opinion was not one of those which can cause weakness. And, encouraged by Madame de Jandrieu, he asked, he dared to ask—after a final interview with the doctor—for Cécile's hand.

The engagement lasted three months, André having

hired a studio at Ville-d'Avray in order to be nearer the Jandrieus, who, on returning from Trouville, were spending the first weeks of the autumn at Marnes. The sudden death of Dr. Burke, due to embolus, had terrified the young man for a moment. He sincerely loved the old physician, who had cared for him since he was a little boy. Besides, Dr. Adam Burke was the confidant of his suffering, the imperative master who ordered him to hope, to believe. In losing him, André lost the great, sincere support of his existence, and distress, a dismayed distress, for a moment took possession of his mind. He again felt surrounded by darkness. The choruses of Manfred, with their Satanic sonorousness, came back to him like the echoes of a sinister past. He had before him the spectacle of *The Other*. A glance, a smile from Cécile drove away these birds of the night. And then he remembered, repeated his old friend's words:

"I command you to believe. You are free. You are *yourself*."

The dead physician still spoke to him. He did believe, he hoped. He dreamed. He allowed himself to be lulled, charmed by love and life. Everything had disappeared, everything was vain, everything was dead. There was nothing but loving and being loved.

Then, at the last moment, doubt and fear had seized upon him. To-morrow he was to marry Mademoi-

selle de Jandrieu, to-morrow Cécile, the embodiment of charm and candor, would be his own. He would smile at this virgin face. He would bear toward the unknown future this young girl who, from the depths of her soul, had said the evening before, while lifting her brow to his kiss: "All my life is yours, and I am very happy!" To-morrow? Terrible anguish again seized him at this thought, and he feared the iron circlet would again press his temples.

Then he thought of Dr. Chardin. He remembered what Burke had said of him: "A master. *The* master."

He rushed to the physician's office as if it were a last hope. Had he the right to condemn an exquisite creature like Cécile to live henceforth with a being marked by an indelible blemish? Had not Burke, in his affection, deceived himself? Had not the physician, to save, or attempt to save a man, lied in saying: "You are free!" Must not this liberty lead to a deception, a sinister revelation, bordering on insanity?

And in the bewildered apprehension of his mind he thought of the happy, loyal family, the father agitated at the idea of seeing his daughter depart, the smiling, resigned mother, the young girl who saw on her finger the wedding ring, and was trying on her white robes for the morrow! His resolution was

formed, distinct and absolute as a sentence. If Dr. Chardin hesitated, *he* would not. Better a blood-stain on the bridal robe, than the bite or the kiss of a madman.

But only a few words from the famous scientist restored to André, in the fullness of youth, the faith suggested by the dead physician. He was free to shape his life in his own way. He was free to hope, he did hope. And the plane trees, with leaves already withered by the autumn, outlining their partially bare branches against the blue of an Italian sky (*He* had seen, *The Other* had seen such skies in Parma) seemed to him a sort of halo of gold, a nimbus around the fair hair and radiant smile of his fiancée.

III

THE MARRIAGE OF ANDRÉ FORTIS

It was exquisite—that last evening when, alone in the little drawing-room, while Monsieur and Madame de Jandrieu were also talking of the future in the next room, the young people—the bride and groom of the morrow—were exchanging those last thoughts, those last words of human beings who, still strangers to each other, will on the morrow bear the same name, share the same destiny.

To-morrow! It was a delicious word that recurred in their talk like a joyous peal of bells greeting the dawn. To-morrow! A whole love-poem was contained in those syllables spoken, repeated, with caressing tones of the voice, and clasps of the hands. They were in the apartment crowded with trinkets, pictures, jewels, laces, in which the wedding gifts were to be exhibited the next morning. The display of fans and gold and silver articles, with the donors' cards attached here and there, laid upon cushions or slipped into cases, resembled a sumptuous exhibition of artistically dissimilar bric-à-brac. There were

superb and ordinary gifts, according to the taste of the friends who had selected these souvenirs, and the odd promiscuousness of the little modern tables and these antiques, glass articles of Gallé, or combs from Lalique, placed by the side of common glassware, old-fashioned liqueur cases, or obsolete ornaments, seemed like the elbowing of two generations declaring their preferences by new designs or former styles. And according to the fashion, there was a display—changing the drawing-room into a shop—of these gifts whose value the guests would scrutinize to-morrow, discussing their number and weight.

André and Cécile cared little for this exhibition of vanity. Hand in hand, they were recalling their memories, making dreams. She gazed at him with her blue eyes, her whole delicate face, bright and smiling, illuminated by trust and love. And he, looking with an expression of protection and devotion at this lovely creature, whose supple figure leaned lightly against the sofa where they sat, placing his lips close to the little pink ear of the child who to-morrow would be his wife, murmured slowly:

"I love thee!"

It was the first time he had used this intimate form of speech, and the somewhat reserved, timid fiancé became an ardent lover, speaking a language that seemed to Cécile like unknown music. She had

flushed at this unexpected familiarity of address, this *thou* which was like taking complete possession of her by the man she had chosen, and her pretty fair head, as if it had grown heavy with new thoughts, half drooped upon the young man's shoulder.

"Yes, you love me! And how happy I am!" replied an almost inaudible voice.

Their hands, which were to be joined before the altar, did not unclasp.

General de Jandrieu, paternal and cordial, entered, interrupting the duet by a "Well?"—adding, "My dear children, I can understand that the time seems short to you, but it is passing. It is growing late. And to-morrow Cécile must wake early. The gown! The famous gown!" André rose, Cécile smiled:

"You are right, Papa!"

"I am always right."

The lover took leave of Madame de Jandrieu, who held out her hands to him with a look of emotion, and Cécile went with him into the anteroom all alone, waiting till he had put on his overcoat and sought the young girl's brow, imprinting a last kiss upon it, to say to him in her turn, softly and slowly:

"I, too, love thee."

André carried away in this last word a whole world of joy. He forgot everything, thought only of

Cécile, absorbed in the one idea: "I shall be the husband of this delightful creature!" The rest disappeared—suffering and evil dreams. Everything was dispelled, driven away, illuminated, joyous. He slept like a child, and woke with happy ideas—gay as the sunshine filtering through the curtains, making the atoms glitter like mica dust in the rays of light.

And it was with a light heart, an alert confidence, a sense of gratitude to destiny, that he went to the house where his bride awaited him under her white veil, in her white gown.

The doors of Saint-Roch now opened, and over the carpet covering the stone steps the procession advanced to the altar. The organ flung up to the vaulted roof that Wedding March which has greeted so many couples thus moving, with smiling lips, towards the unknown future; the Wedding March of festal days succeeding to those same notes of the organ, beneath those same stone vaults, the Funeral March which, more than once, fate should have performed beforehand for so many brides and bridegrooms eager for happiness.

Before the altar, André, when he passed the wedding ring over Cécile's finger, felt recalled to the impressions of childhood, and it seemed to him that he was returning to the youth who possessed faith, long,

so long ago! His fingers pressed, with loving gentleness, the hand which the young girl placed in his, and emotion caused no tremor in her who was giving herself, trusting herself to him, certain of affection and devotion.

Cécile bowed her head beneath the blessing of the priest with a fervor akin to the distinctness with which the *yes* that binds two human beings had been pronounced before the mayor. The relatives, in chairs of gilded velvet, watched the black coat of the groom beside the white robe in the light of the altar.

When the now united pair passed through the double line of guests, friends, curious or envious spectators, questioning or smiling faces bent toward the newly-wedded couple, a ray of sunshine, gliding through the window, surrounded like a halo the blond beauty of the girl who was now Madame Fortis. An electric light could not have illumined with more distinctness the pretty face which looked radiant in the sudden glow. And the superstitious smiled at the sudden appearance of the sun, saying:

"It is a sign of happiness!"

Cécile leaned on André's arm, and this delightful, trusting pressure seemed to the young man a caress.

The procession followed behind the young couple, beautiful in the unconscious pride of happy love, and the vestry filled with the great crowd of guests, press-

ing and shoving through the chairs to the door, and forming there, after the stifling rush, a more orderly line, with the usual clasping of hands and obligatory kisses, the compliments, the "best wishes." There was the inevitable sequence of commonplaces and greetings, indifferent faces forcing conventional smiles, but among which, from time to time, a friendly look, an earnest word, the appearance of some old companion of former days introduced their note of cordial affection and loyal warmth.

Though happy in this attention, this throng succeeding throng, the married couple and their relatives thought the march very long as they entered the hustle and press in Monsieur de Jandrieu's drawing-rooms. The reception, the serving of the refreshments, the inspection of the wedding gifts, the renewed compliments, the new "best wishes" amid the clusters of roses or lilacs—all white flowers—seemed fairly interminable.

Or rather, no, a sort of fever, intoxication, with all this noise, and all these people, gave to this other march the appearance of an unreal vision, and these guests around champagne glasses, frozen chocolate, and sandwiches, the buzz of voices, the laughter, the rustling of silk, the heady atmosphere of a hothouse appeared to the bride and groom like the acting of some rapid comedy. Guests succeeded guests, the

stairways and elevator brought and bore away visitors who all, in trite phrases, repeated the same words, with the same clasp of the hand, which, replacing the fraternal embrace, has become the usual and expected form of greeting.

Cécile moved to and fro with the orange wreath upon her beautiful hair, just the color of ripe wheat, and when she passed him, André, who sought her with his eyes amid the fashionable throng, gave her a tender, happy, very proud smile. He really thought he was dreaming. So this beautiful young girl, admired, envied, as radiant in these rooms as in the sudden ray of sunshine at the church, was his own. She was his wife. She bore his name. He had driven away mournful thoughts, black fears. He could hope and live.

Then, suddenly, amid the uproar of the reception, as he was crossing a little room to join Cécile, he stopped short. A singular feeling, not exactly pain —on the contrary, a sensation almost agreeable, something like the uncertainty of a doze, or the movement of an invisible guide, who gently draws us onward—passed through his brain. He fancied that an unseen finger touched him on the right side of the head. André Fortis remained motionless, without moving a step.

Suddenly he was seized with terror. Was this an

attack? Was not the past, the terrible past, yet dead?

"Come, come, am I not mistaken? The fragrance of the flowers—the noise—the crowd—it is allowable to have a headache. It is a headache, nothing more. I have a headache, that's it."

He tore himself away from the agonizing thought which had suddenly seemed to nail him to the floor, and walked toward the little drawing-room. Cécile was laughing with her friends. One of them, armed with a camera, was determined to photograph the bride and bridegroom, upon the balcony.

As he passed, André saw a pale-faced, somewhat haggard guest in the mirror. It was his own reflection. Smiling just now, his features had quickly assumed an expression of uneasiness.

"I am a stupid fool! Dr. Chardin told me I was released, liberated. There is nothing more to fear."

And as Cécile's friend, Miss Howe, an American girl, repeated: "Yes, yes, I must photograph you, it is pleasant to keep such souvenirs," he replied gayly: "Well, then, let us be photographed."

On the balcony, far from all the noise, which, however, still came to them through the window, he forgot the hunted sensation. Bareheaded in the open air of this beautiful day, which seemed like spring, he

no longer felt the pressure of that hand upon his head, neither obsession, nor headache.

"There is no finer weather," said Miss Howe. "It is Saint Martin's summer. When you are very, very old, you will be delighted to find this summer again in my photograph."

"Oh, very old! We have plenty of time."

They laughed. The American girl thanked them. "That's finished. Oh! it doesn't take long. As short as saying *yes.*"

They went back into the now empty apartment, with its stripped sideboard, its dry carafes, its carpet strewn with petals fallen from the flowers. This solitude, after the weariness of the day of ceremonious joy, appeared to them delicious.

Gradually dusk entered the rooms where the odors of the liqueurs and the roses were floating. The melancholy of twilight filled the rooms so lately crowded, now deserted. Monsieur and Madame de Jandrieu were thinking that soon—so soon—Cécile was going away, leaving still more empty the home, the little chamber with its Persian curtains strewn with flowers, in which she had spent her last day of girlhood.

Cécile, tired but happy, went from one piece of furniture to another, sitting down and saying with a merry laugh:

"I am worn out."

The general, trying to smile, answered, thinking himself cheerful:

"Luckily people don't get married every day!"

The family meal was silent. The parents were thinking of the departure, Cécile of that sort of running away which would soon separate her from these beloved ones, to bear her toward an unknown future.

"Life is strange, nevertheless," said Monsieur de Jandrieu. "We rear a child, who is our daily joy, to have a gentleman whom we do not know, a passer-by—oh! I am very fond of this passer-by, my dear André—take her and carry her away from us. We were everything yesterday, we shall be nothing to-morrow. It is as commonplace as life itself. All parents have made this reflection; but when we make it ourselves, and for ourselves, ah! upon my word, we are a little troubled by it!—I am not very hungry!"

All the parents' hopes were translated into looks as gentle as benedictions, fixed softly upon the wedded pair. Abdication is the lot of the old; if the young do not forget them too soon, they are consoled for their anguish, and repaid for their labor.

Madame de Jandrieu gave her daughter a last kiss, the general wrung his son-in-law's hand, and Cécile entered, with tears in her eyes, the coupé waiting at

the door. André, forgetful of his fears, was happy and joyous!

"I am not weeping for sorrow," said Cécile, seated beside her husband. "I grieve for those who are left alone, but I am happy, you know!"

"You? Why do you say *you* to me?"

"I don't know—"

The familiar form of address, which had seemed to her perfectly natural at home, under her parents' roof, confused, disturbed her in the solitary conversation in the carriage which was bearing them away as if in flight. Yet she was not afraid. It was the companion of whom she had dreamed who was there by her side, whose loving gaze she felt fixed upon her. When the coupé passed under a gas lamp, the light streamed through the window, illumined for an instant André's smiling face and the white gown, then disappeared—and Cécile let her fair head rest on the young man's shoulder, murmuring:

"Yes, happy, I am happy, and I love thee!"

And pressing her to him, his lips sought this virgin's brow, and rested there in a kiss of ecstasy.

Then, with clasped hands, they gazed into the street.

"We shall live to be very old," said André merrily.

"Very old?"

"Yes. I have just questioned a sign. I said to myself, if the first vowel I see is an O—it will mean that we shall live together a long, long time, if it is an R—"

"And the vowel?"

"*Coiffeur!, Virgile coiffeur!*"

"Virgile?"

She had begun to laugh.

"This good Virgile! So you are superstitious?"

"Very. Yet I only half believe these answers of chance. Still, when the reply is favorable, I am glad. *Virgile coiffeur!* We shall live to be very old."

IV

THE ATTACK RETURNS

THE coupé stopped before the house in the Rue Murillo, where the maid who had served Mademoiselle de Jandrieu was waiting for Madame Fortis. Cécile passed swiftly in front of the janitor's room, avoiding curious eyes, and with only the rustling of her dress disturbing the silence of the staircase, ran lightly, as if stealthily, to the apartment which they were to occupy. The electric light in the vestibule illumined the flowers whose arrangement Madame de Jandrieu had superintended, to give a festal air to this new home. Lilacs, in white bunches, brought an atmosphere of spring, a setting of joy.

Cécile smiled at this bright framework of light and flowers.

They remained silent a moment, standing before the mantelpiece in their room, their faces reflected in the mirror, their elbows resting on the marble, and their hands clasped. Their eyes expressed the fervor of prayer. This delicious solitude which commenced their new life filled them with the same

exquisite emotion, an anxiety which melted into sweetness.

"My wife!" said André. "What a word, which contains the whole existence, our existence henceforward. My wife!"

She answered only by taking his hands, and the mute clasp expressed a whole poem of tenderness.

She had no need for speech, that André might understand her. He read her soul like an open book, and softly, leaving her alone to take off the bridal robe which fitted as if molded to her waist, her bust, her whole charming person, which still retained a sweet childish grace, he went away, saying nothing, only making a sign that he was there, close by, in the room which was to be his, opening from the chamber where Cécile was to sleep.

It was a sort of bachelor's room, with a bookcase, a desk, and several choice pictures. André pressed the electric button and, after having looked around him, straightened a frame, taken from the shelves a book and put it back without opening it, he dropped into an armchair. He was thinking.

The whole day through which he had passed seemed unreal. The noise, the crowd, the procession of people, all these vanished faces—was it true? And was he actually in the Rue Murillo, within two paces of the young girl who was his wife, in the apartment he

had hired, and whose fitting-up he had supervised?

Yes, all this was reality! Mademoiselle de Jandrieu was Madame Fortis. This home was the nest, the fireside, the refuge. Upstairs was his studio, with the Park Monceau for a horizon. He was going to work. He was going to love, to be loved. This was the halting place, the happy halting place, the new life.

"Or rather, life!" he thought. "For have I lived till now?" He did not even remember the names of the flirtations which had preceded this great love.

He listened, asking himself of what Cécile was now thinking, what she was doing, if she was dreaming of him. He heard no sound, the adjoining room seemed empty.

"Perhaps she is praying."

It did not displease him, the free thinker, to have this child pray for their common happiness.

He would have liked to tell her so, to speak to her, to see her again. He found the silence strange after the tumult of the day. The clock struck. The sound made him start.

"Why, I am nervous!"

He rose, took a book haphazard, a volume of Musset, "The Nights."

"One evening in my student days,
Full late I sat to watch and wait. . . ."

He hastily closed the volume. That "December Night" had always disturbed him, giving him the sensation of a fantastic reality. The doctor had even told him one day that the man who had evoked that night was, medically speaking, a lunatic.

"These doctors! Such a poet!"

Moreover, he found it strange that the accident of his movement should have carried him to that precise bit of verse which made his nerves vibrate like a bow-string.

> "When by my side he took his place,
> A student, too, clad all in black,
> Like as a brother's was his face. . . ."

The lines André Fortis knew by heart were singing like a refrain, returning like a lamentation to the young man's memory. He had sat down again, and it seemed as if someone was walking behind him, behind the armchair.

He saw himself in the glass, turning quickly, with a questioning look on his pale face.

No one was there.

"Who could have been there? It's nonsense!"

He began to laugh, and heard himself.

"That devil of a Musset! It's his fault."

He had risen, whistling some tune, and suddenly, invisibly, felt himself thrust, urged toward the same besetting idea.

"Full late I sat to watch and wait."

He experienced the strange sensation that the watcher of the winter night was he, and that he should undergo its agonies and terrors. A sound from Cécile's room, the sound of a voice through the door, and the haunting feeling would have vanished. But the chamber remained silent, so silent that André now feared some peril, a fainting fit, an accident.

"What if I should call her?"

Then he tried to recover his self-control. He would leave her to herself. Presently he would laughingly tell her his fears.

But these fears gradually assumed a different form. And it was himself, his own sufferings, that now made him anxious. Did he not feel, on his temples and at the right side of his head, that sensation of strange pressure, a finger bearing upon the bones that would invisibly touch the brain? Yes, that almost pleasing, tempting heaviness, like a luring slumber, lulling in its cruelty, that unwholesome slumber which transformed him into a different man, imposed upon him a new personality, that slumber whose approach he had not felt for such a long, long time, was coming. Like an unexpected specter that had vanished, a scattered mist assuming form, it was rising, gliding into his own individuality, or rather driving it away and transforming it.

"Ah!" said André aloud. "Dr. Chardin has been deceived! Has Dr. Chardin lied? The attack is here! It is returning! Oh! This is frightful!"

And, his voice growing harsh, he again repeated the terrible word, so full of horror to him:

"The attack!"

Then, rising to his full height, he gazed for a moment with an expression of bewilderment and terrible grief at the door which separated him from Cécile, and, with a jerking step, tried to go to a small piece of furniture near the bookcase, where the other day he had placed a revolver.

He was searching for the key in his pocket.

"Where is that key?"

His hand, already fevered, could not find it. A torpor was taking possession of him, rendering his head heavy and, while he was trying to connect ideas, scattered as they are on the eve of sleep, his heavy forehead seemed to be dragging him forward and, conquered, he at last sat down in the armchair. There—uneasy in her turn after a somewhat long period of waiting—timidly, her heart beating violently, Cécile, opening her door, found him seated, not yet asleep, but thinking with his eyes open.

She stopped, expecting a smile, a word; then, a little surprised, she moved softly forward, waiting till Fortis should raise his eyes to her.

In her white dressing-gown, with the lamplight brightening the fine gold of her hair, she seemed still more rosy, more exquisitely fragile and slender, with the elegance of a Diana by Jean Goujon, but a juvenile Diana, whose pride was still timid.

The stillness of André, who did not even appear to notice that she was there, surprised her. She dared not advance, and remained silent; a word from her lips would have seemed like a summons to him. But the slightest noise, the rustle of her wrapper gliding over the carpet, should have roused her husband. He did not look at her. He was staring into vacancy, she did not know at what image. For a moment she thought him asleep.

But he rose abruptly, and this time turned his eyes toward her. They looked amazed.

He made a very courteous movement, the movement of a gallant man who bows to a lady while apologizing for passing in front of her, saying gently:

"I beg your pardon, Madame!"

Cécile thought she was dreaming. That voice was not André's. It had a peculiar sonorousness. The words uttered were brief. The request for pardon seemed addressed to a stranger. "Pardon, Madame!" That word, *Madame,* after the tender confidences murmured in her ear in the coupé which

conveyed the lovers, resembled words in an unknown, unexpected language. André had made the bow as if he had held a hat in his hand, and hastily retreated a step, opening the door quickly, and vanishing in the darkness of the adjoining room.

Left alone, Cécile experienced a feeling of singular terror, as if she had suddenly escaped from reality and found herself in the presence of a vision. Had she actually seen, in this empty armchair, the man who was her husband? Had André appeared, standing looking at her with that air of surprise which bewildered her? Had he really spoken? Had she really heard those words: "I beg your pardon, Madame!"

She examined the objects surrounding her, the furniture, the open bookcase; the book that had fallen on the carpet. Was this unfamiliar room in which she found herself a stage scene, the vision of a dream, or something tangible and real? That door open upon the empty darkness, through which André had vanished, inspired a feeling of terror. She wanted to cry out, all alone in this house. With him she feared nothing, but without him she felt threatened by some indistinct danger, enveloped by an invisible threat.

Then she called. Why had he gone out? Why was there this change in his voice?

"André! André!"

Through the open doorway the next room appeared, still dark and empty. He did not come. He did not answer.

"André! André!"

Yet he must hear. The cry was now strident, the appeal for help of a frightened child. Still that gulf of darkness, that sense of desertion in a habitation echoing with emptiness.

"Oh! I want to go away! I want to go away!" repeated Cécile, and to her trembling lips instinctively returned the calls of her childhood, those which even the old, when dying, find once more in the depths of their memory to call for aid: *Papa, Mamma,* the childishness of the cries being sublimated by the danger.

She rushed back to her room as if pursued. She had just put out half the lights. The white spot made by her wedding gown lying on the sofa frightened her, as if it were a winding sheet. She relighted the lamps. The flowers still framed the mirror above the mantelpiece; but Cécile saw in the glass her convulsed face; and as André had just been surprised by his own reflection, she was startled at the sight of her features.

In desperation, she renewed her call, repeated the name; heard it again fall into the silence:

"André! Where are you, André?"

She did not understand, she did not try to understand. She only longed to fly, to escape from this emptiness, this solitude; to hear a human voice, instead of struggling in this alarming silence so like an abyss.

What if she should ring for her maid? Yes! She was already putting a finger on the ivory button. But what should she tell her? Cécile was not going to ask her to leave this place; to go with her to her parents' home, if she fled. And why should she fly? André was there. He would reappear. He had not gone out.

No, no, since just at that moment he came to the threshold of the room, looking straight before him, as if inquiringly, a smile showing through his black beard.

Then, with a loud, despairing cry, Cécile rushed toward her husband: "Ah! thou, thou, at last!"—and she ran forward as if to take refuge in his arms. But the same expression of astonishment which had surprised her just before again stopped her, and André's eyes gazed at her in a questioning way, as if he did not know or did not recognize this woman here.

"Oh! if you knew, if you knew how frightened I have been," she said, uttering in the words all her

terror, all her tenderness, all her submission. "Oh! but now you are here, and I am reassured. Was I crazy? I thought of ringing for Marthe to go away! Yes, can you believe it? I did not know. I called you, but you did not answer. So, you understand."

She approached him, expecting that he would hold out his arms to shield her like a poor frightened bird. He did not stir. He stood there, attentively listening to what she said, with the expression of a man who wants to understand words whose exact meaning escapes him.

At last he said slowly, smiling politely, repeating the same phrases of apology:

"I beg your pardon, Madame. Why am I here? Why are you here?"

He looked at himself in the mirror: "White cravat. Black coat. Why? I have no evening engagement. I must work to-morrow. A picture is expected. To begin work sooner, I am going to spend the night in my studio. I shall be on the spot." Then he repeated again: "But why are you here? Why?"

And the tone of interrogation was so earnest, urgent, and anxious, that Cécile drew back, certain that the man was insane. Yes, insane or drunk. Terror returned, still more intense, as if she were shut up in the padded cell of a maniac.

The excessive politeness of the man who was her husband and who treated her as if she were a stranger, wondering at her presence, looking at her as if she were some unknown visitor, seemed more alarming than any menace would have done. He had signed to her to sit down and, renewing his question, asked:

"Why are you here? To whom have I the honor of speaking?"

To whom? She looked him full in the face to see if the inquiry was not some strange jest:

"To whom? Why, to me, your wife! André, don't you remember?"

He repeated, as if endeavoring to understand something incomprehensible:

"My wife?"

He gazed at her a long time with an expression of tender pity, the expression of a person full of kindness who forgives.

"But I have no wife, I am not married, I like a free life, the life of work in my studio, complete liberty in the world. I shall never marry."

The tone in which the words were spoken was cold, resolute, and deliberate. Cécile now believed herself subjected to a trial whose meaning she did not clearly grasp. She even wondered if she was really aware of what was occurring around her, of what she saw and heard.

Seated before this man in evening dress, among these flowers, under the electric light, it gradually seemed to her that she was talking with a stranger, in an unfamiliar house, and that this whole past day —with its departure for the church, the march of the procession, the vestry, the afternoon, the crowd, then the solitude and the talk alone together in the coupé—all this was a vision, something fleeting, appearing and disappearing like the phantoms displayed by a cinematograph.

V

IS IT INSANITY?

THERE was a dream-like sensation in what Cécile was experiencing. It seemed as if a gulf was suddenly yawning around her. She felt giddy. Either what had happened during this day of excitement was a vision, or what now appeared to her was a nightmare. It seemed impossible, incredible that the charming fiancé of those happy hours, the tender lover in that flight amid smiles and joy could be the frigid, coldly-questioning man who was there, with a different personality, under the same features, but a new tone of voice, falling unexpectedly and icily from the same lips. To her buzzing ears, her compressed temples, her troubled brain brought the thought:

"Either André is playing some incomprehensible farce, or he is insane, or I am!"

Then the curt, resolute, sententious voice went on:

"No, Madame, no, I shall never marry! An artist must have no fetters. I have my work to do. A great work. I have to live, too; to live with all the

intensity that modern existence offers man; to go, to come, to travel, to see, to see everything, everything."

"But," she said, "I will share this life with you, André. I, too, want to see, and to live! I shall be the most loyal companion in everything and for everything, you know that well."

She awaited an answer, and the young man remained silent, his face expressing increasing surprise —and his black eyes resting upon Cécile's with obstinate intentness.

"Yes, André, yes, everywhere and always! But I told you, I have told you so! And the more beautiful the work, the more proud of you I shall be! So proud—"

He rose abruptly.

"Really, Madame, I beg your pardon for not understanding what you wish to say to me. Where do you think you are?"

"In your—our home."

"To whom do you think you are speaking?"

"To Monsieur André Fortis, my husband."

"I am, it is true, André Fortis; yes, you know my name, but I am not your husband!"

"You are not my husband? We did not kneel before the altar this morning? You did not place this ring upon my finger?"

She held out her hand. The gold ring glittered under the lamplight.

"This ring?"

"You did not take me from my parents' home, bring me here? Come, come, André. What do you mean? To test me, to frighten me? I don't understand. But I beg, I entreat you, cease this jesting, or I shall go mad. You do not know how I am suffering. I understand that it is a joke, but why do you joke in this way? André, in pity, André, say one word to reassure me; I am frightened, I tell you; I am frightened!"

She was sure that he would cease this terrible jesting, that his mask would fall, that she would soon regain the beloved being whose life she was to share. This absurd game would end.

He had wished to alarm her. Why had he done so? Cécile had no idea; but now that she was trembling, what was the use of continuing?

"Yes, I am afraid, I am afraid!"

André, unmoved, replied:

"You know my name, and I do not know yours. To whom have I the honor of speaking?"

Ah! This time she could not doubt. Some terrible attack was transforming this man. André Fortis was no longer the same, was no longer himself. A madman doubtless. She was a madman's wife.

She rose, placing the armchair where she had been sitting between him and herself.

"You know my name, André. I was Mademoiselle de Jandrieu, I am Madame Cécile Fortis."

"There is no Cécile Fortis," said the voice, which was growing strident. "There is no Madame Fortis. I am not married! I am free!—Ah! Madame Fortis, Madame Fortis! A wife who would be a jailer, a daily spy! Ah! no! Ah! no! No, no, no!"

He paced the room with long, jerky strides, an almost savage excitement was succeeding his courteous coldness; his fingers were impulsively seeking some bottle, some ornament which he could throw on the floor, break, crush into fragments.

Then Cécile thought she understood that a sort of rage was seizing upon him, the despairing rage of a being free the evening before, and who feels bound, who is bound and, as it were, imprisoned for life. She was terrified! André regretted having married her. At their first steps into life he was drawing back, rebelling against his duties. She had destroyed his happiness—why? How? She did not know—but this happiness was lying more crushed than any of the articles which André was resisting the impulse to shatter into bits.

'Madame Fortis! A Madame Fortis! Where is

Madame Fortis? When you hear a Madame Fortis announced, you can say that she lies! There is no Madame Fortis! There is a man named André Fortis—myself—who wishes to be subject to no one, and who is really, I tell you, Madame, subject to no one! No one!"

"I understand," she replied, with great dignity. "You wish me to leave this home which I entered so full of happiness. I will do so. I will go to-morrow. To-morrow I will return to my parents. You shall be obeyed. There will be no Madame Fortis!"

Suddenly calmed, he approached her, smiling and slightly shrugging his shoulders:

"But that is not what I said to you, Madame. I told you that I am not married, that there is no Madame Fortis, because there really is none—and I beg your pardon for having unintentionally frightened you, by stating in the most natural way in the world, the simplest of truths."

Cécile would have preferred to see him angry and insolent as he had been just before. This gentleness, more in harmony with his nature, succeeding, as if by an effort of the will, a fit of rage, seemed to the unfortunate wife a sort of insult. It gave his words the cold tone of a sentence. He considered this thunderbolt "very simple." With the studied courtesy

"He apologized for this revelation . . . which, to Cécile, was something incredible, sinister, mad."

of the man of the world, the usual politeness, he apologized for this revelation, this transformation which, to Cécile, was something incredible, sinister, mad, but to him was a fact, nothing more, a fact as if the singularity of the situation had escaped his attention.

And it really did escape him. Cécile, amid the bewilderment of her own reason, perceived in André's mind an absolute certainty, the fixed conviction of the lunatic who believes his vision. She had married a madman! She had only one thought—to fly, to regain the room she had had when a young girl, to become once more Mademoiselle de Jandrieu, since there was no Madame Fortis.

She glanced at the clock. It was just on the stroke of two.

André divined her thought:

"It is too late for you to go away, Madame. I repeat that since chance has brought you here at such an hour, you can remain until daylight. I will sleep in my studio."

He bowed again and, as before, disappeared in the darkness of the drawing-room.

Then instinctively, with a bound Cécile rushed toward the door to push the bolt. She no longer desired to see him. She was afraid of seeing him again. All alone, shut up in this strange nuptial

chamber, she wanted to try to realize what had happened, to collect her thoughts, to decide what she should do.

"Let us see, let us see. What? Is he mad? He must be mad!"

She had taken her seat in the armchair where just now she was gazing at him, studying him. With her elbows on her knees, her nails pressed on her teeth, she was thinking. Two o'clock! Monsieur and Madame de Jandrieu, yonder, were doubtless talking of her and her happiness. They had not gone to bed. Her happiness! If she should tell them what had become of her happiness in the first hour! Poor parents! What would they do on seeing her appear like a fugitive in the night?

"No. To-morrow. Let us wait until to-morrow. I will go to-morrow."

She looked at the closed door. With the bolt shot, she had nothing to fear. She was really in her own home. She would wait for the day. But how long this night would be!

Her sad eyes, full of tears, wandered to the flowers on the mantelpiece—the mournful flowers which had become funereal. There were orchids of strange forms among them—melancholy flowers. The white wreath, the buds of the orange flowers, were smiling near in the full glow of light. And nothing was more

ironically heart-rending than these festal decorations surviving the ruined hopes.

She had married a madman! She was a madman's wife! Nothing in the world was more terrifying to her than this savage disorder, cutting off a human being, converting him into a mere puppet, whose strings were pulled by insanity. There was no doubt that the person who had made the remarks heard a moment ago, was certainly not in the possession of his reason. But she bore his name! She had given herself to him with all her soul! And she loved him! Even in her terror she felt that an emotion of pity gave her a desire to open that door and go to him— at any sacrifice— to learn whether he was suffering.

Where was he? In his studio? Up there. If he should call? If he needed help? If no one answered?

"I am going to see him. It is impossible that he should not return to his senses!"

But she was stopped by the dread of finding him unmoved and resolute, repeating: "There is no Madame Fortis!"

Sometimes she shivered with cold, sometimes, opening the register, she felt stifling, attacked by fever. She watched the clock. She listened to the noises of the night. The hours struck; confused sounds of cabs, rolling in the distance, seemed like indistinct

murmurs; some whistle of a locomotive, more distant still, rent the darkness like a sharp point buried in her happiness.

Besides, she felt exhausted. Though not wishing to sleep, she wrapped herself in her cloak, gradually, in the drowsiness of fatigue, letting herself glide toward slumber amid the confused visions which come before repose, where mingled smiling faces, the procession, the music, her mother's smiles, André's words of love, and the childlike laughter in the carriage, the carriage that was bearing them toward their future life, the happy life together. By degrees, forgetting her disappointment and terror, happy, lulled by those images of consoling joy, Mademoiselle de Jandrieu—she who was, yet was not Madame Fortis—fell asleep in the closed room which just now had seemed to her as menacing as a maniac's padded cell, as desolate as a prison.

VI

THE AWAKENING

When Cécile woke it was daylight. The gray November dawn was filtering through the curtains. She rose, feeling the chill of the cold, and wondered how she chanced to be in this unfamiliar room. Glancing about her for some piece of furniture that she knew, she felt as though she were in a dream. Through the window opening upon a stone balcony, she saw, pressing her forehead against the glass, that bit of unknown landscape, the Park Monceau, whose trees, stripped of their leaves, outlined their dry branches against the pallor of a snowy sky.

The solitude of the park, enveloped in a gray fog, suddenly gave her an impression of distance, as if she had waked elsewhere than in Paris, amid the silence of an unknown city. Bunches of chrysanthemums, their yellow and brown leaves withered by the frost, a long lawn against which stood forth the outlines of yews still green, the black trunks and gnarled branches of tall leafless trees, queer heaps of straw wrapped around palms as a protection from the cold—and yon-

der, a white spot, with figures like apparitions or forms in dreams, Gounod's monument, with the cupola of the rotunda, dimly visible through the fog, seemed like some cemetery where no visitor, not even a shadow, was passing on this icy morning.

She felt hopelessly unhappy and bewildered. The sight of that pleasure-ground reminded her where she was, who she was. What an awakening!

So this was the end of that poor love romance, which, commencing at Trouville, ended yonder as if in an abyss. She was André's wife, and André, affected by some attack of neurosis, was yonder, somewhere, under the same roof, but separated from her by this strange disorder which prevented him from recognizing her. What should she do now? Return to the paternal roof? Tell everything to the dear parents who believed her happy? Fly?

But this was abruptly breaking all the bonds that united her to André. It was placing something irreparable between him and the future. What if she should have patience? What if she should wait? Perhaps this attack might be short?

Yes, but she was afraid. She felt keen anguish at the thought that her husband—her husband!—might reappear before her, and say in that implacable voice which seemed like that of a judge speaking to an adventuress:

"There is no Madame Fortis!"

She had always had an instinctive horror of this dread disease, insanity. On the journey to Dijon she had visited with her parents la Chartreuse, where the demented are received. She had heard their shrieks through the open windows. She had seen one unfortunate man brought in a carriage, screaming, appealing, wild-eyed, with foam on his lips, almost dragged along by the keepers. His despairing cries had long rung in her ears. Had she then married one of these human derelicts, and was she going to hear André shriek and lament like the maniacs of la Chartreuse?

She wanted to ring for her maid, yet dreaded to see her appear, announcing some new tragedy.

Thérèse was a faithful girl, whom Madame de Jandrieu had regretted to lose. She had served *Mademoiselle,* whom she loved. The mother was glad to know that she was with Cécile.

"Perhaps Thérèse will tell me where he is."

She pushed the electric button. And now she was sorry that she had called her. So soon? What would the maid think when she was asked for information about her master?

Thérèse did not permit her face to show any sign of surprise and, at her mistress's question, answered that Monsieur Fortis was already in his studio and

had rung for François, the man servant. Monsieur was working.

"Very well, Thérèse. I thank you."

"Does Madame wish me to dress her hair?"

"No, I will dress it myself."

She wanted to be alone, to think, to make up her mind. She was fully aware that, on her decision, on the action she was about to take, she was risking the happiness of her life. To return to her girlhood home was to abandon André to his fate, to abdicate, divorce him the very first day. And she felt a tender pity, a mother's pity for the unfortunate man whom she had seen a few hours before so unlike himself. To the fear of the timid woman, terrified by the insanity, succeeded with the necessity for devotion, a longing for sacrifice, that proceeded from love even more than from the instinctive feminine charity.

He was working. She wanted to see him. Perhaps she would now find in him once more the charming fiancé, gentle, trusting, a little mournful, almost shy in his tenderness, whose voice, so unlike the curt, hard tone she had heard last night, seemed like the music sometimes heard with closed eyes as in the lulling of a dream. To that André she had given herself to the inmost depths of her soul. In spite of the commonplace manner of their first meeting, he was not the husband of any kind, whom the young girl

marries to escape from the monotony of home, to release herself and be free; no, it was really the chosen one, the husband expected and singled out, it was the nameless one who is *He,* the man whose life she had vowed—and which she still desired—to share.

Even after the terrible experience of that night of horror, she was unwilling to destroy that hope by returning to Monsieur de Jandrieu. Even if André had been attacked by some sudden illness, if the terrible tête-à-tête must be renewed, well! did not duty, her duty as a wife, lie there? Had she not promised her devotion to all suffering, as she had promised her hourly affection?

"He is working! I am going to see him. And I will say nothing to anyone. And nothing shall be known. Nothing."

Cécile had dressed, fatigue giving to her pretty, childish face a pallor which added to all her grace the charm of suffering. She left her chamber, crossed the empty drawing-room, and reached the inner staircase which, lined with works of art, pictures, and armor, led to André's studio. She stopped on every step. As she went up, she felt the sense of fear gaining on her more and more. What if she should find above that apparition with the impenetrable black eyes fixed upon her, expressionless, incomprehensible?

She leaned upon the carved wood railing. She felt her heart beating violently. She was tempted to go down again.

"Come! That would be cowardly!"

She knocked at the closed door of the studio. A voice answered: "Come in!" André's voice, but it was the hard tone, the cutting, hostile voice of the night before.

It was not André whom she was going to find there, behind yonder door, it was that unknown person who had appeared to her like a specter of misfortune.

"I don't want to see him! I don't want to see him!"

She had uttered aloud the words which she thought she had only murmured and, with an impatient gesture, she nevertheless unconsciously opened the door and, in the immense studio, heaped with valuable works, seated over yonder before his canvas, palette in hand, she saw André in the dull light pouring through the huge glass window.

With his body half bent over his canvas in an attitude of intense attention, he did not even lift his head when Cécile entered. He seemed to be absorbed by a fever of labor, drawn, attached to his canvas, hypnotized by his work.

Cécile gazed at him. He had removed his white cravat, tossed his coat on an armchair and, in a black

velvet jacket, had doubtless resumed the habits of his daily life. His pictures, landscape studies, appeared hung on the walls among other works by friends. This whole huge studio, luxuriously and artistically furnished, the tapestries, the draperies, the flags forming a background of picturesque decoration to the glass cases full of choice trinkets, the marble busts upon their brackets, the manikins clad in ancient or Japanese armor, knights of the Middle Ages or Samourai of the time of the Ronins, this setting in which every article had its worth, its importance, as it were its biography, revealed the impeccable collector and the man of taste. Amid these canvases, hangings, and marbles, he seemed like a workman toiling from daybreak, and he allowed Cécile to approach close to the stool where he was sitting, without even noticing that anyone was there.

She stopped before him to speak, looking at the painting which André had commenced. She was astounded.

What the artist was seeking, placing upon the canvas, was not one of the landscapes whose touching poesy had made the young master's reputation, the poesy so gentle and dreamy in its sadness, drawing from Nature the consoling tenderness the stepmother sometimes possesses. It was a terrible vision, where amid the gold and colors, in an apotheosis of fairy-

land whose jewels dazzled the eyes in glittering pyrotechnics—was Humanity, incarnate in the diversity of its types, wallowing before a huge idol with the head of a Beast, crushing the bodies, grinding nude figures, making—as the press sends forth the juice of the grape—the blood flow from corpses heaped, crowded around its feet, as if in a terrible Juggernaut procession. This monster, with the bestial face, was the Golden Calf; behind it, like two specters, were Famine and War—Famine, emaciated, sinister, as though rendered anemic by all the blood and strength imbibed by the swollen Beast, eager and gluttonous; War, blood-stained, roaring, with bare arms, red from slaughter, as his sword was red, as his feet were red from dabbling in a mire of massacre. And before this Golden Calf crouched the contractors and the courtiers, the villains and intriguers, the wan laborers, and the satisfied, portly men—a strange light, a light of dawn or of a fire, enveloped this scene of horror, the display of bodies crushed by the weight of the unmoved Beast, his snout and chaps dominating this crowd in a lurid vision of Apocalypse.

Cécile was terrified. She involuntarily recoiled before this spectacle. Was this evocation perhaps haunting André's brain?

She wished to know, and called:

"André!"

He raised his head, and the same expression which had terrified Cécile the night before, came into his eyes. He was evidently astonished to see an unexpected visitor in his studio. He hesitated an instant to interrupt his work, as if trying to understand what was happening, then—after a glance at his picture—rising, he placed his maul-stick and palette on the stool and, still in the coldly-polite, indifferent tone that had alarmed her, asked:

"You wish to speak to me, Madame?"

He made her a sign to sit down and she obeyed, wishing to try to find out what thoughts were stirring behind that brow, what was passing in that sick brain.

Then, with a precision still bewitched by memory, she evoked the whole romance, exquisite in its simplicity, which they had lived together until the end of yesterday, until the past horrible night. She tried to reawaken in that mind which seemed obstinately deaf to her words, cherished images, sayings, little delightful acts, and made herself tender, caressing, beseeching.

Still the unvarying impassiveness of that face, the pallor of the features, which seemed set in the black beard, the gloomy expression of those deep eyes in which she could read nothing—black lakes, where everything sunk without reflection, without sound—

the lack of comprehension in which André, doubtless unintentionally, persisted, gradually made her nervous, ready to scream. She was struggling against an obstinate resistance, speaking to her husband, and speaking to him of himself, but realizing that the memories evoked recalled nothing to this man, who stood there listening indifferently.

Cécile even shivered with genuine fright when, having uttered the name of Fortis, André answered:

"I know him very well. He is my namesake. Another self, if you choose. He is not I. The landscapes you see hung on the wall yonder are by him."

He motioned toward the studies that lined the walls of the studio—views of Fontainebleau, Bas-Bréau, the rocks and streams of the Vaux de Cernay, landscapes of Chevreuse, and the valley of Bièvre—impressions of spring or autumn, morning and sunset scenes, a whole series of exquisite perceptions, fixed by the brush upon panels or canvas.

"We are sometimes mistaken for each other in the papers. He has some talent," said André, in the tone of a man making a concession to an art he does not admire. "But what is a landscape picture? A sketch? Painting, like music, is made to express higher ideas, to give to humanity which requires them, lives by them, the symbols, the vision of great

chimeras. Landscape, it has been said, is a condition of the soul. Granted. But there is something higher than this painting of a corner of the earth that pleases us; it is the painting of the soul itself! To grip the human soul by a symphony, as well as by a palette, to depict mystery, the incomprehensible, that is the ideal! André Fortis does not know anything beyond; he keeps to visible Nature, which photography can represent absolutely. Now, in Art, there is only the invisible; there is only the dream. The man who lives the ordinary existence goes, comes, eats, sleeps, breathes, grows old. He does not live. This André Fortis, whose signature is the same as mine, will find it vain to exhibit in the Salon d'Automne; he is a talented artist, yes, but a painter for prize medals."

So André was speaking of his work as a stranger would have done. He was judging himself like a critic. He was condemning his own efforts in pursuance of a new ideal which he bore within himself. If she had felt no fear of the fantastic situation in which she was struggling, Cécile might have believed it was a jest on the part of this man, who was thus commenting on the works he had produced as if they had been done by another. And the artist who was throwing upon the canvas the apocalyptic vision which appeared there, those twisted bodies, those

bleeding forms, that sinister King of the World, was in truth another, a very different person from the poetic landscape painter of summer evenings, the smiles of dawn upon silvery ponds.

Cécile gazed at these studies with tender eyes, as if they were the very images of her illusions—all that she had loved in that André who was no longer there, or who, being there, seemed to her only a stranger, almost an enemy.

Suddenly she uttered a cry, in which both joy and sadness mingled.

Among these studies of forests, these woods of Barbizon or Chailly, she had seen a recent canvas, a bit of seacoast, an immense beach and, on the fine sand, figures she instantly recognized, her father, her mother, and herself, by the side of a young man who was *He!*

"Ah!" she said, "Trouville!"

It was Trouville, with the dress she wore the day he first saw her, the same weather, the beautiful clear sky, the color of Madame de Jandrieu's gown, the bit of the beach very perfectly reproduced, with the setting of villas and Norman houses where they had met.

Looking at André, pointing with her hand to the luminous study, she said again, trying to awaken a beloved memory: "It is Trouville."

"A Parisian landscape," replied André, "a water color subject. I don't understand."

Once more, either he was playing an outrageous farce, or his reason was lost. Cécile did not wish to prolong her stay in the studio. She was stifling.

"I beg your pardon for having come!"

He was standing between her and his canvas, as if he wished to keep the secret of his work entirely to himself.

"Oh! I can be interrupted when I am painting."

He raised the thin forefinger of his right hand to his forehead:

"My work is there," he said.

And his black eyes, just now so expressionless, suddenly flashed, as if illuminated with pride.

He repeated: *there* with joy, and Cécile, through the half-open door, before she went down the stairs, saw him sit on the stool again, take up his palette and, bending far over the "work," feverishly resume his painting—the canvas, the subject, the fantastic vision having an invisible loadstone which attracted, summoned, held him.

VII

THE DUTY OF CÉCILE FORTIS

CECILE returned to her chamber in despair, and the problem presented itself to her again. Should she fly? Should she stay? Strike her parents to the heart by telling them the truth? Or condemn herself to live alone with a madman?

A madman? Was he really a madman? The precise tone of his words, the manner in which he criticized the work of this Fortis, to whom he seemed a stranger, maintained the clearest expression, apparently the most accurate form. But, however ignorant she might be of the characteristics of insanity, Cécile knew well that lunatics—General de Jandrieu had talked about them all one evening in connection with a comrade who had died a megalomaniac—retain in their visions, or their manias, a baffling logic.

She knew also, she hoped, that madness might be cured.

"I will stay near him."

Yes, that was her duty. Perhaps André might soon return to his senses. Besides, she would spare

her father and Madame de Jandrieu a terrible sorrow. "If they could know nothing. Or later. Much later!" To suffer a little, to suffer for them was becoming, in her thoughts, a sort of bitter joy. She was one of those women who are born comforters, nurses of the soul, who have an appetite for sacrifice. When very young, in the depths of a church chapel, during an attack of religious excitement, she had mentally vowed to become a nun. And the fear had come to her that she might be guilty for not having kept this vow. "A child's vow," Abbé Vibert had told her. "I vowed to become a soldier."

Well! Now she would keep this mental vow, this cry of a fit of mysticism. She would be to the man who was her husband the Sister of Charity, the guardian of every hour. Would he suffer? The certainty was that she was there to prevent him from suffering.

"I will stay, I will stay."

Her resolution was formed. She would convert her life, apparently crushed, into a duty, awaiting the end of the sinister nightmare, relying upon the future.

She was only anxious to know what the servants would think of André's attitude, his remarks, the strangeness of his mental condition. Could she conceal from these hourly witnesses the sudden change

in her husband's ideas? They would soon perceive the disturbance of this unfortunate brain. Then Cécile said to herself that, if André would consent, they could go alone to the South. Italy, Egypt—he should choose—and in the solitude of that journey of recovery, she would try to regain, to find once more in him the man she loved. An impracticable plan! André, attracted by his work, hypnotized by the canvas up there which he was covering with a strange, terrifying composition, would never consent to leave his studio to go with the woman he called *Madame,* and did not even seem to know.

The poor wife felt as if she were lost in a dense fog. In whatever direction she wished to go, she encountered an impossibility. The best course was to trust her life, thus adrift, to chance. Meanwhile, once more, she resolved to stay. Let whatever fate might decree happen.

Suddenly, as she was wondering whether to tell André that luncheon was ready, or try once more, by going to his studio, to recall him to her, to seize upon and find him again, someone knocked at the door of her room and, terrified, dreading she knew not what misfortune, she cried:

"Who is there?"

"I," said a very gentle voice.

Cécile recognized it. It was the voice of André,

not the cold, unfeeling André, who let his words fall in so curt a tone; no, the voice full of tenderness which, during the sweet hours of their engagement, had murmured in her ear of the future, dreams of the life together, of marriage, of love. Oh! there was no doubt of it! It was really the same musical and delicious caress to which she had listened, closing her eyes, in the little drawing-room in her father's house, when, hand clasped in hand, André was talking with her.

His name rushed from her lips: "André!" She darted toward the door. There, smiling, gazing at her with an indefinable expression of tenderness, half sad, half joyous, he stood on the threshold. He did not seem to dare to advance, shy, yet happy to gaze, set in the framework of this flower-decked room, at her who was his wife.

Cécile went to him with outstretched hands, ready to throw her arms around his neck, feeling tears of joy spring to her eyes.

"It is you, it is really you!"

He came forward, shut the door and clasped her in his embrace.

"It is thou!"

And this "thou" seemed to her infinitely sweet, as the final proof of the disappearance of the nightmare.

"How did you spend the night?" asked André.

Cécile felt a vague uneasiness in the tone of the inquiry, and the young man's black eyes questioned her with a look of suffering, which a ray of happiness quickly swept away.

These eyes had an enfolding, imploring love, so different from those with the icy pupils, which had rested upon her, frightening her. Their gaze had become the frank, clear look which sought a soul in the depths of other eyes, as the feeling in the depths of a landscape is sought, a look of reverence, the look of the artist, the lover, which restored to Cécile all her joy.

She dared not tell him that she had been waiting for him. She did not know whether he was aware of the brief attack he had undergone. She did not wish to question, she had no desire to know. He was there, he was smiling at her, he was speaking to her. He had become himself again. Farewell the memory of that terrible vision! Life was continuing, resuming its usual course. She blessed Life.

Yet André had an indistinct impression of a gap in the last hours he had passed. His questions showed it to Cécile. He was inquiring from her, asking if anything had disturbed her the past night. He—he remembered very well—yes, he remembered it—he had grown drowsy in his library, yonder, and

"'It is thou!'"

had just waked from a sleep in the armchair, with a volume of Musset lying at his feet.

How had he returned there? What had become of the strange scene which had terrified Cécile? How had André put out of the way (as a criminal would remove the traces of his crime) the vestiges, the proofs of his second life? *The Other* alone could have answered, *The Other,* who had mathematically accomplished an act the real André did not even remember and, obeying that other consciousness, put out of the way, concealed, hid his work from sight—and gave place to a new personality continuing, in the same body, a new existence. The same features, but different souls.

"It's the first time that Musset sent me to sleep," said André Fortis, laughing. "A strange drowsiness suddenly seized upon me. Did you think of me, Cécile, while I was sleeping so near you?"

"So near me?"

"In your childlike sleep, did you call me? It seems to me," he added in a very low tone, his lips just brushing her pink ear, "that I should have heard you!"

Cécile shuddered. It was really André who was speaking this time. The attack of insanity was only a passing somnambulism that he did not remember on awaking. She would not even think of all the ter-

rible possibilities of an attack which any unexpected emotion might bring on again. She had been so frightened last night, and just now, by encountering some walking puppet, some moving statue, that she gave herself up, without analysis or foresight, to this joy of finding André again what he had been, with his old charm and smile.

"But that sleep was absurd," he said. "And, a moment ago, on waking in that armchair, I wondered where I was. I fairly shivered. I warmed my hands at the register. And I thought if I should find myself in the palace of a fairy, the good fairy, the sweet, good fairy, was thou!"

Cécile had taken André's fingers, which were still cold, in her hand, and was warming them with her breath.

"It is absurd," repeated André. "A hand that seems to press upon the skull—a pleasant torpor—and this waking in the chill of the morning!"

He could not exactly account for the sensation experienced. He seemed to be searching, questioning his memory.

"Don't think about it any more," said Cécile. "I love you. Do you love me, André?"

"With all my soul!"

"And you will always love me?"

"Always."

It was the same earnest expression of the words uttered in the coupé, so short a time ago—so short a time—an age to Cécile who, for a moment, had had a glimpse of the horror of a catastrophe. It was the same eternal duet of lovers upon the threshold of life. She, too, Cécile, fancied that she had had some evil dream. What had occurred during the night was a vanished vision! Was she very sure that she had seen that other André, sinister and implacable?

"I should like to visit your studio," she said.

"My studio?"

He seemed astonished.

"Yes. I am not familiar with it. I should like to see some of the paintings you have commenced, the sketches—"

"Oh! I have nothing to show, even to you. Since my picture in the last Salon, I have undertaken nothing. I was wholly yours. It would have seemed to me that, to devote any time to my painting, was robbing you of hours that I owed you." Then he added with charming grace: "The profession of fiancé consumes time."

"No matter," she replied. "I should like to see."

"Let us go and see, Madame!"

And, pronouncing, in the tone of a caress, this word *Madame,* which *The Other's* lips made so harsh and, as it were, hostile, he offered his arm to Cécile

who, leaning on it, ascended, step by step, smiling, the staircase climbed that morning with such a throbbing heart. Sometimes she stopped to say to him:

"Then it's really true? I am not dreaming? We are at home?"

But, as she approached the studio, she dreaded suddenly feeling a deep disappointment in finding again the other André, the formidable André, seeing once more the sinister, apocalyptic painting, which had so startled her a short time before.

Had not André just told her that he had done nothing, nothing at all since the last Salon?

That canvas—that "Golden Calf!"

Though she tried to control herself, she uttered a cry of surprise upon entering the studio and looking at the easel. The "Golden Calf" was not there.

No canvas rested on the empty easel. The stool, the brushes, the palette were gone.

"Here are my sketches," said André, showing her the studies hung on the wall. "This is all I could offer you."

"And it is a whole existence of a poet of the brush! Oh! I am telling the truth! If I should find a picture unworthy of you, you don't know how I should feel, André."

She stopped.

"No, I am afraid I might vex you—"

"Vex me? Me? Never. The idea! Well, if you should find a picture unworthy of me—such grand words! You will make me vain, Madame. Well?" He waited her reply, while drawing her close to him, his lips pressed upon her fair hair.

Cécile, nestling in his embrace, answered:

"Well, I should ask you to efface it."

"Oh! nonsense," he replied.

"Yes, I want my husband, my dear husband, to create only masterpieces."

"The orders are to be a genius!" he said laughing. "The deuce! Agreed. I will try!"

Cécile looked him steadily in the face. "And you really have no other picture commenced in your studio?"

"Really. Not another picture."

"There was no canvas placed on your easel this morning?"

"This morning?" he asked, a little anxiously. "Why this morning?"

He had frowned, as if trying to gather Cécile's meaning.

She perceived that she was going to disturb him, make him uneasy.

"I said this morning, I might say yesterday."

"I have not entered my studio for three days. No one has entered it. Did anybody tell you that there

was a canvas on my easel? What canvas? Who has seen that canvas? I have commenced no picture, not any. Why do you ask me that?''

''For no special reason,'' she replied. ''An empty easel looks dreary, so I thought—''

''Well,'' replied André, ''my first picture on the easel will be, look, this Trouville, whose sketch hangs yonder, and if I regain the impression of that hour of light—you remember, you remember—it will be the masterpiece you require.''

Cécile looked at this exquisitely subtle landscape, the bit of sea, the beach, the villas, this study in the brilliant light, which had attracted her attention just now and, fixed by André's brush, contained a moment of his life.

If she had not found this nook of Normandy which *The Other*—for she could give him only this name—had scornfully declared a water color study fit for some English girl, she might have believed that she had been dreaming, that she had not entered this studio, that there had never been a painting on this easel, and the sinister vision, with the mass of bodies crushed by the Beast, did not exist.

The terrible picture had disappeared. André told the truth, he had not undertaken any new work. A sort of unforeseen being, a passer-by, some fantastic visitor, had come to disappear again. Now Cécile

was wondering whether she had really seen the canvas which was no longer there, whether all the agonies of the past night were not an illusion, and she had experienced a waking dream.

Little she cared! She felt such joy in finding André again as trusting, smiling, and as much in love as the night before.

Cécile had no farther fear. With the facility a happy illusion bestows, she closed her eyes and gave herself up to the joy of her recovered happiness! Ah! the nightmare of that frightful night! It was far, far, so very far away!

"Do you love me?" she said softly, resting her pretty, fair head, with her familiar movement, upon André's shoulder.

And he, in the voice so unlike the harsh accent of that evil vision, repeated the eternal words of eternal love:

"I worship you!"

. . . . . .

"So, my dear Doctor, you firmly believe that a man may have a double consciousness?"

It was when dessert was served at a grand dinner given by Madame de Vernière partly in honor of Monsieur and Madame Fortis, who were so perfectly happy. Famous, too! In the last Salon André Fortis had exhibited wonderfully poetic landscapes and

brought back exquisite canvases from Italy, where, for months, he had traveled with Cécile, sometimes living in Venice, sometimes in Palermo, in the picturesque little cities of Umbria, or the exquisite corners of the Bay of Naples. It was an Italy seen through a new temperament, no longer the theatrical country of the romantic artists, a rare, deep Italy, with a modernity that seemed like a new flower blooming amid the marbles of the past.

Cécile had been the artist's wife exactly one year, and not an allusion had been made by her or André to the singular event of their first night beneath the same roof. Not a word had led Cécile to believe that André had any knowledge of what had passed, or had caused André to suspect that Cécile had perceived anything abnormal. Perhaps, by a sort of tacit consent, they both maintained silence concerning what there was—or rather what there had been—mysterious in their existence. Perhaps the young wife had entirely forgotten those hours of terror. The year which had just passed—so quickly—with the stay in Italy, the return to Trouville, where André finished the promised canvas, a landscape of *high life* as profound, as intensely poetic, under his brush, as a view of Sicily, or a corner of Sorrento. This first happy year of marriage had passed like a flash of lightning on a summer evening. General de Jandrieu, proud of

his son-in-law, often told his wife that they had been fortunate, and charming Madame de Jandrieu tried to appear "the least like a mother-in-law that was possible" in the new household. She was thinking solely of the delight of being a grandmother and hearing herself called some sweet pet name by stammering rosy lips.

"They have plenty of time," replied the general.

"But we, my dear?" she said.

And at the dinner given by Madame de Vernière, Cécile's godmother, André Fortis again met Dr. Chardin, whom he had gone to consult last year almost at this very date, and the question of a guest—a journalist who was always eager to gather information about everything—turned the conversation to the precise subject that had been a dramatic agony. Across the table, while carrying on with his neighbor, a witty little brunette, fascinated by all the current fads, a conversation which, on her part, consisted in demolishing nearly all the Art of the past, and on his in defending certain masters, André was listening to the remarks of Dr. Chardin, at whose right Cécile was seated.

VIII

A SCIENTIFIC INTERVIEW

THE journalist repeated his inquiry as he would have questioned the scientist in an *interview*.

"Can a person have a double conscience?"

"Certainly. There are even several consciences, according to professions and duties. The conscience of a stock-broker, for instance, is not the same as a Protestant pastor's. I created an uproar in the class room of Monsieur Désiré Nisard, and was even posted for having hooted the professor when he told us that there were two moralities. Perhaps he simply failed to explain himself clearly: there are often as many moralities as situations."

"Oh! Doctor!" said Madame de Vernière.

"Understand me accurately, Madame, there is, in reality, only one morality, one sole morality, but there are different ways of interpreting it. And without resorting to casuistry—"

"But, Doctor," interrupted the journalist, "that is not the conscience I mean; it is the double condition of which I want to speak—my mind is full of it—I

want to publish a series of articles upon la Salpêtriere—''

''And you are asking me for copy? Like this, at dessert, as a sort of cheese!'' said Dr. Chardin, beginning to laugh. ''Well, yes, the personality of a human being can be halved, and consequently have two consciences. We know of cases of periodical amnesia, that is, periodical loss of memory, and during these amnesias the conscience is evidently different.''

''That's the question I wanted to ask you, Doctor. A man has, as you call it, his personality divided—very well—then his life is double as well as his consciousness.''

''Yes, that is a scientific phenomenon that has become classic—''

''I know—the state of amnesia of which you speak may be compared, for instance, to the condition of a somnambulist, who goes, comes, reads, works, without recollecting anything upon awaking.''

''Almost,'' said Dr. Chardin; ''though there may be some differences.''

''I know—''

''Journalists know everything,'' replied the physician.

''What is that gentleman's name?'' Cécile asked her right-hand neighbor.

''Frédéric Clément, of the *Boulevard.*''

"But—this is the question I should like to be permitted to ask you, my dear Doctor"—said the journalist: "I will suppose that, during this condition of amnesia, double consciousness, or no consciousness, as you prefer, the divided man of whom we are speaking commits a crime, yes, murders or robs someone, is he responsible? Has a somnambulist responsibility for his acts of somnambulism?"

Cécile, for a moment, felt a pang akin to the suffering experienced the previous year, and while these remarks were being exchanged, she watched André, who sat opposite to her, to study upon his face the impression he might receive from such a conversation. Through the flowers, camellias and chrysanthemums, of the centerpiece, his face appeared absolutely impassive, only somewhat pale under the electric light which fell upon half his forehead, and the thin cheeks framed by his black beard. Perhaps there was some uneasiness in the fixity of attention in his look, as if tensely strained toward Dr. Chardin, though his lips were smiling and answering the little brunette lady, who was making, with her pretty teeth, a mere mouthful of the "Black" painting of the Venetians of the Museum, Tintoretto, Titian—those *ink merchants.*

Frédéric Clément's question had attracted the attention of the whole table. Dr. Chardin was becoming the center of all eyes, and Cécile awaited the phy-

sician's reply as if the journalist's inquiry had expressed her own anxiety.

"That question has already been asked," said the doctor. "I believe melodramas have even been written on the subject. I remember having seen one a long time ago, in a provincial theater, where the plot dealt with a magistrate who, in a state of somnambulism, committed a crime and had to preside at the very court before which the supposed murderer was tried."

"An innocent man?"

"An innocent man, of course."

"And how did the drama end, Doctor?" asked Madame de Vernière.

"By a fortunate conclusion, dear Madame. In the midst of the trial the magistrate, an assassin without knowing it, was suddenly seized with one of his attacks of somnambulism and, before the eyes of the bewildered jury and his horrified colleagues, repeated, with tragical exactness, the acts of the murder—using his paper knife as he had handled the dagger in a former act—and he himself related why he had killed, why he had avenged himself. Then followed the acquittal of the accused man, the embraces of the family, the applause of the spectators. I will spare you the falling of the curtain."

"And the magistrate?" asked Cécile.

"Really, I don't know what the author did with him. I don't recollect the end, I only remember that the case medically was connected with the play."

"Well, but, my dear Doctor," Frédéric Clément persisted, "in your thought as a spectator, in your estimate as a scientific man, was the magistrate who wielded the knife guilty?"

It seemed to Cécile that an expression of suffering was kindling like a smouldering flame in André's eyes, which had now become fixed.

"No, no; in my opinion he was not guilty. The man who had murdered was in some way very different from the man who was judging the case. These amnesias, these losses of memory, these divisions of the personality, are complete neuroses. Somnambulism transforms a certain individual into a totally new human being for a certain period of time. Intoxication does the same. The drunkard is a temporary maniac. The best of men, on becoming intoxicated, may be changed into a complete brute, fierce and bestial. People are not mistaken who speak scientifically without knowing it, when they, for instance, say of a coward: 'He is white-livered,' and of a drunkard: 'He is quarrelsome in his cups.' The man who dreams, as well as the man who drinks, has two very distinct lives: his real existence and his factitious one, and one is independent of the other.

Therefore he is not responsible for the duality of consciousness this strange neurosis, the dividing of his pesonality, imposes upon him.''

''Two beings in one, two different human lives in the existence of the same man? Why, you are telling us an Edgar Poe story.''

''Not at all. The matter has nothing to do with the grotesque tales of the American author. I am speaking of classified, catalogued, scientifically known facts. Why—only the other day a soldier in uniform was found sleeping on a bench in the Boulevard des Batignolles, with his trousers covered with mud. He was supposed to be drunk. When, on being waked, they questioned him, he did not know how to explain his presence in Paris. He was in garrison at Limoges, and from Limoges he had come there, without knowing why, without knowing how, having left the barracks under an incomprehensible impulse and walked, walked, walked straight on as if he were in a dream. He was brought before a court-martial as a deserter. Deserter! The poor fellow was not in the least guilty. It was not he who had left the regiment, wandered from Limoges to Paris, it was *another* man.''

''How many romances could be made from science!'' remarked Madame de Vernière.

''And history, too, Madame. What if I should tell you that the Wandering Jew—you know, the famous

Wandering Jew of ballad and legend—was undoubtedly simply a somnambulist!"

"Old Laquedem?"

"Certainly. It has been observed that this particular neurosis, from which the little soldier was suffering, and which is called the ambulatory mania, the necessity of escaping, walking, going forward, one knows not where, attacks the Jews quite frequently. Now, in our French villages, at different periods, Jews from Poland and Roumania have often arrived, with their long beards, their furred overcoats, staff in hand, and these Jews appearing thus, walking straight forward, like the foot-soldier going from Limoges to Paris, these Jews thus urged by the ambulatory mania appearing at various dates have, in the imagination of our peasants—and even of the citizens of *Brussels in Brabant*—incarnated the Jew pursued by the malediction of Calvary. Stricken by neurosis, a species of traveling somnambulists, beings who have fled from their firesides without knowing why, will perhaps return to die, without realizing that they have deserted them. Doctor Tissié met one of these wanderers, who was walking more than seventy kilometers a day in this dreaming condition. He set out after taking bank bills whose value he did not even know in his secondary condition, and was walking on like a tramp. He has been seen thus in Germany,

Turkey, Hungary, Russia, Africa. In Russia, he was almost hung for a Nihilist—in a dream! The gibbet would have seen an innocent man, an unconscious man die. And these wanderers continue to move about in their ambulatory dreams—these are some of the beings who lead a double life, and it is not from Edgar Poe, once more, that they are quoted, but from Charcot!"

"And," asked the journalist, "have you ever met this sort of somnambulists who lead this double life? Tell us that, Doctor."

Across the flower-decked table, in the heated atmosphere of the dining-room, it again seemed to Cécile that André's eyes suddenly assumed an alarming, almost savage expression. His face had paled, a slight quiver stirred his lower lip, and a singular, slow, almost mechanical, gesture of the right hand seemed vaguely seeking a knife on the white tablecloth.

André was waiting, watching with a tightening in his throat for the physician's reply:

"I might have met some," replied Dr. Chardin coldly, "of whom I should not tell you, but if you wish to write an article on the subject, my dear sir, you should not apply to me, but to Dr. Klipper."

"Dr. Klipper?"

"Yes, he is an Alsatian. And a man of genius."

"Dr. Klipper," repeated the journalist. "It's astonishing. I don't know him."

"Doubtless no one here knows him," replied Dr. Chardin, seeking with his eyes some one of the guests who might contradict him by speaking of Dr. Klipper. "He is an extraordinary man who, in his laboratory recalls the alchemists Rembrandt painted and evoked in his engravings. He lives in an out-of-the-way corner in search of a mystery, as Balzac's Balthazer Claës was pursuing the unknown, and he pretends to have found, or to be on the eve of finding, an instrument, an X or Y or Z ray, which would enable the human brain to be read through the skull like an open book."

"He is a lunatic," said Madame de Vernière.

"Not at all. I have already told you: he is a man of genius! But an attempt has already been made to prove genius a neurosis."

"Oh! I must go and interview Dr. Klipper," said the contributor to the *Boulevard.*

Dr. Chardin shook his head.

"You will not make him speak. I don't even know that you will succeed in seeing him."

"Indeed! But if I need him, if I am ill, if I *carry* sickness, as one would say in the regiment?"

"Dr. Klipper does not practice."

"What does he do?"

"I have already told you: he investigates."

The physician glanced at the guests who were listening, interested by the mystery.

"And if I should try to specify what he is seeking, you would exclaim over its improbability, and believe it some tale of Poe, Wells, or Stevenson."

"Tell us, Doctor!"

"Doctor, you are making our mouths water!"

"What is your Jean Klipper seeking?"

André was waiting more eagerly than anyone else for the explanation from Dr. Chardin solicited by these pretty women, these table neighbors who were becoming as silent as if the master had been there in the flesh or commenced a lecture.

"Really, it is difficult to explain it to you without becoming a little pedantic. I beg your pardon, ladies, but I shall seem apparently incomprehensible."

"You insult us, Doctor," said Madame de Vernière, laughing. "I protest in the name of these ladies."

"Well," replied Dr. Chardin, "this astonishing, extraordinary and, I repeat, original genius, Jean Klipper—you see that doctors do not always attack each other like wolves, artists, and—pardon me, sir, journalists—Dr. Klipper is seeking our third eye."

"What did you say?"

"I said our third eye!"

"What does that mean?" asked the mistress of the house, in the name of all her guests.

"Simply that—like all vertebrate animals—we have there, look, under the forehead, a gland named by the zoölogists the pineal gland or pine-cone, the pineal body, the cone, and that this gland, in spite of its name, is in reality neither a gland, nor a nervous ganglion, nor a lymphatic ganglion, but a degenerate organ—that this pseudo-gland may therefore be considered as a third eye, an eye which we have in us in the latent state, an eye which has not developed, which has not emerged, which has not perforated the cranium, but which exists and which physiologists have found at the end of their scalpels."

"Then," said the reporter, "this eye would explain the fable of the Cyclops."

"Exactly. We may imagine that there was a time when this third eye appeared in the middle of the foreheads of unknown men of primitive or fabulous times. I am not talking to you about absurd things. It is certain that this rudimentary, degenerate organ, which to-day serves no purpose except to perpetuate in us the remembrance of one that existed in our remote ancestors, is an atavic legacy, atrophied in the course of years. Oh! Dr. Klipper is not alone in having studied this pineal gland epiphysis. Rabl Ruckhard, in 1882, noticed it in fishes, and declared that it

is really an eye. De Graaf, in 1886, studied it in the blind-worm, the pretty reptile which may frighten you, ladies, in the avenues of the forest of Fontainebleau, but which is more inoffensive than a house-sparrow, the blind-worm, a sham serpent, a degenerate lizard. And Rawlin Spencer is studying this third eye in the lizards. It is also found, very plain and distinctly characterized in the bird, for instance, in the pigeon. In the pigeon, and in man."

"Which is often the same thing," remarked a wit.

There was some slight laughter, but not much. Dr. Chardin's little speech was captivating the attention of the guests.

"Only," he went on, "in the pigeon the organ in question is apparent, while in man, it requires preparation to see it, the removal of the whole upper portion of the hemispheres. Let us not talk about it; it is not a subject suitable to serve with dessert. It is only Thomas Diafoirus who entertains ladies with these beautiful surgical affairs."

"But, Doctor," somewhat timidly interrupted an old gentleman, a great reader and bibliophilist, "you know that Descartes has spoken of the pineal gland, of your third eye? My very learned friend, Professor S. Pozzi, reminded me of it the other day. Descartes even claimed that there, yes, in this gland, was the seat of the soul."

"Not entirely. I don't remember his statement. But you are right, sir; Descartes has mentioned it, and Galien before Descartes. Yet neither has thought of what Jean Klipper dreams—that is, to give to man this third eye of which he is deprived!"

"The supplementary eye?"

"Where is it? In the middle of the forehead!"

"It's bewildering!"

"It's Cyclopean!"

"It's frightful!"

"An eye in the forehead! Oh, horrible!"

The interruptions came from every direction, like exploding torpedoes. And Dr. Chardin quietly enjoyed the amazement of his listeners. The interjections amused the scientist, who was accustomed to these expressions of bewilderment in the presence of surprises.

"Pshaw! it's a matter of habit," he said; "if it should become the fashion, it would be considered a beauty spot. And then, it would be useful! The Cyclops must have had less fear of being blinded by sparks than modern blacksmiths. One eye more would be more life, and life is to man the most precious commodity, a loan of a few years which, when due, he must pay without date to the great Usurer. Now, this is why I told you that Jean Klipper had genius. He has a young and pretty wife, whom he worships

—and who is blind. It is for her that he increases his labors and attempts the impossible. The unfortunate woman's sight is gone. He wants to restore it to her. She no longer has her eyes. They are closed, they can see only the light, without distinguishing the form of objects. It is this third eye that he desires to give back to her."

"Nonsense!" cried the reporter.

"What I am telling you may not seem credible, yet it is the simple truth. Dr. Klipper has invented a sort of electrical lamp, casting its ray upon the young woman's forehead, performing, in some measure, the function of the solar rays upon the earth. The sun makes the invisible seed sprout. The doctor hopes that the electricity, penetrating along the bones of this human creature—I do not use the scientific terminology to explain this to you, I am trying to make myself understood, and it is somewhat difficult, for I repeat, this has an air of insanity—the electricity, penetrating, perforating, enlarging the hole in the skull through which the pineal nerve issues, producing an unexpected growth, will cause this third eye to expand, to open, and restore sight to his beloved blind wife! I am not relating a romance, I am quoting a fact, a case. We have seen so many scientific miracles. You will see, and we shall see others."

"Where does Jean Klipper live, that I may go to him at once?" cried Clément joyfully. "What a revelation! What an article!"

All Dr. Chardin's hearers were exchanging incredulous remarks. Pretty sceptical smiles rested on the lips of the women. Cécile alone was perhaps interested, even troubled, knowing that everything was possible. Madame de Vernière said to the scientist: "You are telling us stories like Scheherezade."

"No, no, I am talking like the phonograph. I belong to my own day. The impossible is trite."

"Then," stated André, his eyes sparkling, "this Doctor Klipper is really capable of working miracles."

"No, but he is capable of making discoveries which would unsettle all knowledge and all laws. He is the advance guard of those scientists who are pointing out unknown lands. It is possible that he may fail. But he is not a charlatan, who creates an uproar over his investigations; he is, I say once more, a solitary man who silently pursues them in obscurity. And I have told you that this devil of a man has already made an infinity of observations on the human brain which astonish the licensed scientists, and myself, who am not a timid person."

"But is this man Mephistopheles?" said Madame de Vernière.

"No, he is an excellent fellow and a worthy Alsa-

tian, without affectation or malice, who is satisfied with upsetting the world from the depths of a cellar, in a laboratory as big as this napkin.''

''He doesn't live on the Brocken?''

''No, in the Batignolles. Oh! the fantastic is within the reach of everyone. To see wizards we need only to take a ticket on the Metropolitan.''

''I'll get the ticket! I'll make your wizard talk! And the *Boulevard* will publish his picture on the first page.''

''And you will not say that I have not warned you of the genius! He is a man of genius!''

''Cracked! Off!''

''It is only fools who have no crack.''

During the exchange of these remarks Cécile felt the sensation of uneasiness and suffering increase, and, without seeming to do so, continued to watch her husband, whose face, with its dead whiteness, appeared paler than usual, the black beard framing the thinness of the Saracenic countenance. The feverish brilliancy of his eyes did not escape the notice of the poor wife, trembling lest she should again see the strange fire that had glittered in the wild eyes bent upon the canvas, the vision of Apocalypse, in the studio, on that unforgettable night.

All this conversation at dessert, half scientific, half Parisian, was turning around the alarming case of

André Fortis. To Cécile, he was the center of the discussion. She was searching, feeling with the acuteness of the being who loves, all that André must suffer if he realized his condition, if he still had fears of another attack. She was asking herself if these remarks, that amused the guests like the gossip of the day, might not awaken in the unfortunate man a perception, a remembrance, a sorrow.

The feverishness of the look, the movements of the clenched fingers, did not permit a doubt that André was suffering, was repressing painful sensations while the physician was speaking. But everything vanished when they rose from the table and Dr. Chardin, offering Madame Fortis his arm, the guests entered the drawing-room, the men going very soon to the smoking-room, where the journalist continued to *interview* the physician, while André remained with the mistress of the house, as if he desired, by talking with the ladies, to drive away the besetting thoughts, the sorrowful dream of his life.

"So," Frédéric Clément repeated, "your Dr. Klipper is a *gentleman,* and has some fine surprises in store for us."

"If he doesn't stop on the way, yes. You know that Pasteur had a cerebral hemorrhage which almost carried him off or left his intellect impaired, which would have been sadder still? On the whole, this at-

tack was benignant. But suppose that a little more blood, something the size of a lentil, had penetrated the brain—all the marvelous discoveries of the great scientist would have been over. The length of Cleopatra's nose, it appears, influenced the world. A little shorter would have changed the fate of the universe. A drop of blood more or less and mankind would have kept rabies. It keeps it in politics, it is true, and the parties have not yet found their Pasteur. As for Jean Klipper, if he remains, if he lasts —everything depends upon lasting in this vile world —he will amaze his century and, some day, will have his statue."

"Which would not prove, my dear Doctor," remarked the journalist, "that he is a peerless man. Who has not his statue now-a-days? Who does not have his marble? Who does not have his confetti?"

Dr. Chardin began to laugh.

"Ah! you incorrigible Parisian, you are always playing the wit!"

"What do you expect? You are always pursuing science!"

As, having finished his cigar, the physician joined Madame de Vernière on the threshold of the drawing-room, he found Cécile, who appeared to be watching for him. She forced a smile, suspecting that André would not lose sight of her while she was talking with

the doctor, and trying to give the conversation the appearance of a commonplace interchange of insignificant words, she said very quickly to Chardin, in an extremely low tone:

"Don't be surprised at the smile which will contrast with what I am going to say to you, Doctor, and forgive me for speaking of it here. But I know one of those cases of divided personality of which you were speaking. Take care; we are noticed."

Dr. Chardin, accustomed to maintain his impassiveness while receiving confidences or witnessing human suffering, did not allow his face, smooth-shaven à la Yankee, to betray the slightest surprise.

He said slowly:

"Ah! you know!"

"I have seen," she said.

Cécile maintained her smile.

"A serious attack?" asked Chardin, who also affected indifference.

André's eyes did not leave him.

"A few hours."

"When?"

"A year ago."

"And since then?"

"Nothing. But I am afraid—"

"Fear is the worst counselor of man. Don't be afraid of being an optimist. I carefully watched just

now the person of whom you wished to speak to me. And in my chat there was a sort of experiment attempted—he listened without too much nervousness—"

"Yet—" she said.

Then, pausing:

"He is watching; he is conjecturing!"

The physician finished rapidly:

"There will perhaps be some storm again—there is electricity in the air. I noticed it, but the thunder is very distant. Besides, I am here!"

He added, bowing like a society man who was thanking Madame Fortis for a cup of tea:

"And, if necessary, we will call in Dr. Miracle."

"This Dr. Klipper? You are serious?"

"Very serious."

"A prince of science consulting a bone-setter?"

"Oh, it is no appeal to a bone-setter. Besides, I should not despise a bone-setter who would cure me!"

André seemed to be watching somewhat anxiously from a distance the brief dialogue, whose earnestness was concealed under commonplace society mannerisms. Cécile went toward him, making her smile express as much joyousness as possible.

"What was Dr. Chardin saying to you?" asked the artist.

"He was talking about your views of Venice."

"Really?"

"What would you expect him to say to me?"

"I don't know," answered André. Then he added dreamily:

"Venice? Ah! The exquisite city to lull one into forgetfulness!"

"And to love," said Cécile, whose gaze rested tenderly upon the seeker of dreams.

André returned with a smile the smile of the wife who comforted and hoped.

IX

THE MALADY RETURNS

To hope!

In the luxurious apartment facing the Park Monceau, Madame Fortis was living between hope and fear. Nothing was making her believe that her husband might fall back into the clutch of his malady, yet everything was making her dread that the "stranger" would suddenly revive in the man she loved.

Since that evening at Madame de Vernière's André had appeared more nervous than usual, and, in spite of Dr. Chardin's assurance, Cécile dreaded, like a specter, the apparition of that *Other* whom she had seen. She was terrified by this sort of living phantom, stranger, intruder.

She avoided making the slightest allusion to the doctor's words. André worked a great deal with a sort of feverish eagerness. Cécile even feared that this rage for work might put a little too much strain upon his nerves. She sometimes begged him to give himself rests, vacation days.

"No, you know that I am happy only when I am before my canvases. And with you, my darling!"

"Besides," he said one evening, "what is finished is finished. We never know what may happen."

"What do you expect to happen?"

"Nothing. I am joking. Some art admirer who will carry off my landscapes."

Yet Cécile insisted that he should seek some amusement to divert his mind. There were monthly dinners of artists where, meeting his companions, he could talk of all the thousand and one stories current in the studios, drawing-rooms, or behind the scenes, which render Paris the largest of small provincial towns. He had neglected these meetings since his marriage. Cécile urged him to go to them.

"And your club? Usually wives are jealous of the club. I am not. You see your friends, you talk, you rest—"

"But nothing, my dear Cécile, is worth an evening spent with you, near you!"

"Oh! I am sure of that," she replied with caressing coquetry. "Only, you know the old song:

"A wedded wife
May be found, may be found
Forever and aye!"

She had the feeling that this restless brain needed much diversion, and persisted: "My parents are to

entertain some tiresome people to-night. I will go to them, and you won't be bored by spending the evening with people who talk nothing but nonsense. Or you shall come for me very late, just as they are leaving."

Then André dressed and went out, and Cécile, knowing that he was at the club, was satisfied that the artist, overwhelmed by the labor of the day, needed this change of scene and different atmosphere. Solitude, favorable to work, might be painful to the mind if, by chance, André was remembering—

And he had assented to seeking in the bustle, the change, a variation from the daily life, in whose background Cécile feared there might be an obsession.

"And, you know, I am ambitious for you. Yes. Friendships must be cultivated. Do you see many members of the Institute at the club? When I married, I promised papa that you would become one."

"What," replied André, "have I married a *climber?*"

One evening she came home rather late from General de Jandrieu's. André was at the club. She felt somewhat lonely in the house, where everyone was sleeping, and, without knowing why, experienced a vague uneasiness. She did not want to go to bed until André returned. She gazed out of her favorite window at the Park Monceau, which seemed covered

with very black ink, a few branches scarcely visible against the slightly clearer sky, and the everlasting Gounod monument, its whiteness still distinct. And each time she found herself standing there again, with her forehead pressed against this same glass, she recalled the sorrowful night of their first arrival in the apartment, the horror of the vision the next morning.

"I won't think of it any more," she said to herself. "It is so far off."

She waited, wishing André to find her up, or rather letting the hours drift by in thought, and it was three o'clock in the morning—the strokes were sounding from the clock—when he came in.

"How late you are," she said.

He looked at the timepiece. "Why, that is true! Time flies. I did not think it was midnight."

"Did you enjoy yourself?"

"Upon my word, no!"

"Whom did you see?"

"A lot of people. I didn't know half of them."

He seemed tired, and had no wish to talk. His eyes wandered toward the clock and rested there with a surprised expression.

"Three o'clock!" he said. "It is strange!"

Drawing out his watch, he glanced at the hands again.

"Three o'clock, it really is three o'clock—it's astonishing."

He passed his hand over his forehead, as if he felt some pain.

"Are you suffering?"

"No."

"Is there anything that troubles you?"

"Nothing."

He fell asleep as if tired out. The next morning Cécile found him restless, his face worn, haggard, thoughtful.

He had mechanically laid his pocketbook upon the mantelpiece the night before, and Cécile, from her dressing-room, saw him standing before this mantelpiece. The open mirror door of a wardrobe showed the young wife the reflection of her husband, who with a gesture of bewilderment, opened the pocketbook and remained motionless in amazement, staring at a bundle of bank bills he had taken out. André's whole attitude expressed such stupefaction that Cécile, hidden in the dressing-room, stayed there in silence to watch him, repressing the questions that rose to her lips.

André was now turning the pocketbook over and over like a man who encounters some unfamiliar object. He touched the bank bills with his fingers, creased them, counted them, then once more examined

the pocketbook. A dark-green leather one with silver letters, his own, the very one Cécile had given him. Yes, his fiancée had designed that old silver monogram herself.

His pocketbook?

But how came a bundle of bank bills this morning in the pocketbook that contained the night before three hundred francs—three bills of one hundred each?

"Fifty-two bills! Fifty-two thousand francs!"

André's thin hand passed over his brow with the familiar gesture.

He looked at himself in the glass, and saw that he was very pale.

Cécile, as motionless as he was just before, pressing against the wall of her dressing-room, saw him turn his head around, his eyes searching to discover if he was seen. Then he quickly slipped the book into an inner pocket of his morning coat, which he buttoned with a rapid gesture; his whole anxious face expressed the fear of being watched, the desire to escape notice. The countenance bore the look of a robber who has just committed a theft, and wants to fly.

Cécile was now trembling from head to foot.

She had seen those movements of fingers handling, creasing the notes, and she, too, had counted the number of the bank bills André was touching and reckon-

"Andre's thin hand passed over his brow with the familiar gesture."

ing. Where did they come from? How were they in the pocketbook which she recognized so well? André's bewilderment had not escaped her any more than his final wish not to be seen, to hide these notes. She found herself once more in the presence of something mysterious and disturbing. But she would know.

She went out of her dressing-room.

André, his features visibly contracted, tried to smile. Then he alleged the necessity of going to his studio. He wanted, before luncheon, to add a few strokes of the brush, to finish a bit of Sorrento.

"Are not you tired? Don't work too much."

"One never works too much."

"You haven't told me what you did at the club yesterday."

"Nothing. Talked. A commonplace, wasted evening."

He did not speak of the notes, the pocketbook, the astonishment which had overwhelmed him, that she had read clearly just now.

Cécile let him go. While lunching, she would question him.

But, precisely at the luncheon hour, General and Madame de Jandrieu came to pay their daughter a visit. The general was returning from the funeral of an old comrade in the army of Metz, at Saint-Honoré d'Eylau. He stopped at the Park Monceau with his

wife, who accompanied him. And André begged his parents-in-law to stay.

"No, no, old people with old people, the young with the young."

"You never come," said André.

"I don't wish to be a mother-in-law to you," replied Madame de Jandrieu.

"Have I ever given you that name?"

Cécile noticed that her husband was specially insistent in keeping General and Madame de Jandrieu, as if he felt the necessity of shunning a private conversation with her. Yet he was neither preoccupied, nor dull. She even thought him too lively during the meal; his gayety seemed a little forced. He appeared to be racking his brain to talk, to speak of the novelties of the hour: the theater, the exhibitions.

"Are you preparing any new masterpieces for us, André?" inquired the general.

"Oh! masterpieces! No. But I have a sort of fever for work. The brush moves, moves, the color flames, the canvas smells sweet. And I am even going to leave you to work again."

"Go, go, my dear boy."

André kissed Cécile on the forehead and went back to his studio, leaving his wife with General and Madame de Jandrieu, both delighted with their son-in-law's cheerfulness.

"What a charming fellow! You look like turtle doves!"

"Very pretty, and in a delightful nest!"

Yet the mother noticed a latent absence of mind in Cécile's glance. She asked her if she felt any anxiety. No. Only André was perhaps working too much. So nervous a temperament required rests.

"But you are happy?"

"Very happy."

"Really?"

"Really, Mamma, I assure you."

She was in a hurry to be alone. She wanted to know the truth. Her parents had not reached the Park Monceau, when she went up to André's studio, and knocked at the door. He was finishing his picture of Italy, living over the hours she had lived with him there.

"Ah! That is beautiful!" she said, looking at the canvas. "Yes, it is superb!"

Cécile did not know how to question, to ask explanations, and André, absorbed in his work, appeared to wish to avoid any inquiry. Besides, she was afraid of wounding him, committing some piece of awkwardness that might irritate him, and soon said:

"I am disturbing you. I will go."

He did not say a word to detain her. Well, she would wait. But the idea of the man standing be-

fore the mirror and counting the bank bills did not leave her.

They had intended to spend their evening at the opera. The performance was "Samson and Delilah." André listened, telling Cécile how much the music stimulated him, his imagination summoning dream landscapes, while the orchestra lulled his visions.

"A man needs a little smoke and an accompaniment to his thoughts, the smoke of a pipe, or the echo of old melodies. That is why I am so fond of having you at your piano. When you are playing, it seems as if you were dictating my sketches."

"Only I no longer play. I really believe girls marry especially so that they need not play the pieces which have been taught them."

Suddenly Cécile added: "Sunday, at Colonne's, they are to give Schumann's 'Manfred.' I do not know it. If you like, we will go and hear it."

But she was startled by his convulsed face.

"No, no, no," he said, "not 'Manfred.'"

The sonorous tones of former days, the voices that had lacerated his nerves, suddenly returned to his memory. He changed the conversation, took his opera glasses, and surveyed the house.

Cécile went home without having had the courage to ask what he had done the night before and, still anxious, fell asleep at a late hour.

THE MALADY RETURNS

The next day André began work early. The happy fever under which his picture was growing, continued. When Cécile had finished dressing, she rang the bell and asked for the mail and the newspapers. The *Boulevard* was among them. She tore off the wrapper and looked at the first page.

X

THE GAME OF CARDS

In the "Echoes of Paris" signed by Frédéric Clément, a name instantly attracted her attention—André's. She unfolded the sheet, reading eagerly, startled.

The reporter was describing a scene that had taken place at the club, Rue Boissy-d'Anglas, the night before last. A young artist who usually never appeared at a gaming table had risked a wild game with Prince Stalinski, famous for his bold method of defying fortune. For hours, there had been a sort of duel of luck between the Parisian artist and the great Polish nobleman. At one time the prince, smiling, elegant, courteous, lost more than a hundred thousand francs. But the artist would not rise from the table until he had himself lost all his winnings.

The prince, having won back two thousand five hundred louis, quitted the table himself, saying:

"Let us stop there! It no longer interests me."

The artist, trying to induce him to continue the game, replied:

"No, no; fifty thousand francs' loss is exactly the figure I fixed for to-night!"

The reporter, continuing the anecdote, added:

"Much attention was attracted by the calmness of the two opponents, who both played automatically, as if their minds were elsewhere, the prince ironically indifferent, the artist quiet, with a look which did not even seem to see the pile of bank notes heaped upon the table. This tournament around the cards greatly interested the *aficicionados.*"

And Clément concluded:

"Is it necessary to name the conqueror? More accustomed to handle the brush than to meddle with cards, he had perhaps during the day signed one of those landscapes for which picture-dealers pay such high prices, but we doubt whether his afternoon brought him in as much as his evening. Monsieur André Fortis, like the Roman Emperor, can boast of not having wasted his day."

Cécile, after having read the article in the *Boulevard,* went through it again. She was terrified. She was absolutely certain that André had played this game in that condition of unnatural dream-

ing which robbed him of his own personality to substitute another's. The journalist had noticed this significant fact: André's glance did not even seem to see the sum won, the heaped-up bills. And the expression of surprise of the man awakened, counting with amazement the bank notes he appeared to be questioning while handling! André's bewilderment in the presence of the money he had in his pocketbook, without knowing how it had come there! The article explained everything.

André had surely had an attack the other night at the club, another attack of the malady during which, though fleeting, without calculating the sum he had risked with Prince Stalinski, he had gambled, gambled like a madman, haphazard, winning, he did not know what, remaining at the table without knowing why, haggard, bewildered, as he must have been the next morning on finding in his own house his unexpected gain.

So, for hours, far away from her, André had once more become that *Other* whom he feared.

He was not cured! For a year she had been able to hope that *The Other* had vanished, but André was not cured! He had gambled—perhaps he did not even remember having played. No, certainly, he did not remember it. She had only to recollect in what way he had held those notes in his fingers.

He had gambled—he might become involved in a quarrel, threaten, kill—and he would not remember it!

Cécile read once more, shuddering with terror, the article in the *Boulevard,* which she spelled over as if learning it by heart:

"Who both played automatically, as if their minds were elsewhere, the prince ironically indifferent, the artist quiet, with a look which did not even seem to see the pile of bank notes heaped upon the table—"

"Oh! no, he did not see! He saw nothing! He was outside of himself! It is terrifying! He might return to me with blood on his hands, and he would not know it! He would be responsible for what *The Other* had done!"

But, in truth, did he not know? Was it possible that this dream of a night—not this dream, but this reality, lived in the second state of his existence as if in a fog—could have left no trace upon André's mind?

Now that she knew whence these bank notes came; now that the paper had related the adventure of the night, she would no longer hesitate to question him, and when Fortis came down from his studio, she really did so.

"You don't know it," she said, "but I have a wish, a fancy. I have not many whims; I have never asked you for anything. To-day I am going to do so."

"What?" said André.

He seemed delighted. It was his joy to render her happy.

"But you will not want—"

"Why?"

"It's very expensive. Oh! It isn't a pearl necklace; mine will do. Formerly women asked their husbands for a coupé, a pair of horses. I belong to my age. I should like an automobile."

"An automobile?"

"We must keep in the fashion."

"An automobile it is," replied André; "but later, when I have delivered some more views of Venice to Telasco. I've no money at my disposal."

He had pronounced the last words in the most natural manner in the world, and Cécile felt that he was really telling the truth. He certainly did not remember the adventure at the club; he had forgotten Prince Stalinski. And this was precisely what revived in the distracted wife the full measure of her suffering.

If the memory of a fact which occurred a few hours before escaped André's brain, it was because a gap had been made in it, because, for a brief period, he had again lived that other life, the life of which he now had no knowledge, but which was as real in its strangeness as his own, his daily existence. He was

not cured. At any instant the amnesia, the suppression of his personality, might attack him!

At the risk of saddening this mind, Cécile went straight to the truth, tearing aside the veil, wishing to know.

"But," she said, gently, gazing into the depths of his eyes, not as a judge who is examining, but like a mother who smiles while putting a question—"those bank bills; yes, the ones you brought home yesterday."

"Bank notes?"

He began to laugh merrily.

"What bank notes?"

"You counted them standing in front of the mantelpiece, in your pocketbook with your monogram, the one I gave you."

"Bank notes?"

Like a man who is trying to remember something, he fixed his eyes upon Cécile. An effort to think was going on in his mind.

He repeated:

"Bank notes?"

"Yes, the ones you won from Prince Stalinski."

"What Prince Stalinski?"

"At the club, the other evening."

"I?" he cried, striking himself violently on the chest.

There was such apprehension, such sudden suffering in the exclamation that Cécile was alarmed, regretting that she had made this attempt.

"Come, come," he said, collecting his ideas, his forehead contracted as if he were trying to solve a problem—"who has spoken to you of Prince Stalinski, of money won?"

"At the gaming table, the other night. Look!" she said, holding out to him the paper trailing from the table, and André for an instant felt fierce anger while reading Frédéric Clément's article.

"Is it possible?" he said, raising his hand to his forehead. He stammered like a man overwhelmed.

"Yes, possible!—It is possible!"

The *Boulevard,* which he was rereading, produced upon him the impression of a fragment of a cinematograph in which he suddenly saw himself moving, going, coming, bent over a gaming table, throwing down cards, a hurrying, restless phantom, a phantom that was himself.

With quivering lips, he repeated:

"It is possible! Oh! yes, it is possible!"

Then, angrily hurling aside the paper crumpled in his wrath, he exclaimed:

"And you saw me counting the bank bills? Where are they?"

"In the pocketbook," Cécile repeated. He did not

have this pocketbook. Where had he put it? He did not remember. Of what he had done, what he had said at the club, or on his return, when Cécile had seen him holding the bills in his fingers, he no longer had the least recollection. It was not *He* who had lived through those fevered hours, it was *The Other.*

Then, uttering a cry of rage, he threw himself into an armchair, covered his face with his hands and, amid sobs, violently repeated the words: *"The Other! The Other!"*

Sometimes he stared straight before him, his clenched fist seemed to threaten a vision in space. In his eyes shone the flame of murder.

Cécile regretted having recalled this suffering, re-awakened this memory.

"Where is the pocketbook?" asked André, suddenly starting up. "How was this money won? I must find it—Prince Stalinski! I scarcely know him. I may perhaps have spoken to him twice in my life!"

He held out his arms to Cécile as if to draw her to him, and when she came, he let his head fall on the young wife's shoulder, embracing her, imploring her forgiveness, whispering in her ear, her neck, between two kisses, as if some witness were watching and listening:

"Forgive me! Forgive me! You will forgive me, won't you?"

"Forgive you, for what?"

"For having lied. For not having told you all. You, my darling, you! For having led you to marry a sick man, a madman, for aught I know?"

Cécile soothed him, clasped him like a grieving child who comes weeping to be comforted.

"Why no, why no, you are perfectly sane. You are right, you did well, I love you. With all my powers I love you, André! I worship you!"

But he, amid moans of suffering, answered furiously:

"Dr. Chardin lied to me. Dr. Chardin deceived me! Oh! science! Their science! They know nothing! They lie! They say to each other: 'Let us always console the person who suffers! And then, too, he may be cured!' He did console me, in fact, assured me that I was exactly like any other man. What another scientist had told me he repeated on the eve of our marriage. He was afraid that, being forced to lose you, giving you up, I should kill myself—and so I would have done. He did not say what he ought to have told me: 'It would be better to disappear!' Certain human beings have no right to love, have no right to be happy. They have a defect. And there it is! And I have given you my name, and you have given me your life in all

confidence! And we awake to this reality!" He glanced at the paper, kicking the copy of the *Boulevard* aside with his foot. "I am incapable of knowing what I did the other night, and I might have committed some dishonorable act, for which, though unconscious of it, I should be held responsible! It's idiotic, absurd, shocking! Oh! my poor Cécile, how wretched I am!"

Sobs rose in his throat; he seemed like a little child. His wife tried to soothe him by caresses and the loving words murmured softly to very young children, whom we want to lull to sleep. There are lullabies for sorrow too. André felt his despairing rage soften a little under these gentle words. Cécile strove to comfort him. She found deliciously soothing things to say. The Sister of Charity sleeping in every woman quickly became, in the sweetest and most tender words, a moral ambulance for the unfortunate man. The sufferer felt a cooling balm upon his wound.

She spoke of hope. She did not talk like the physician, affirming that the will can do everything, that we are cured when we desire to be cured—she transformed into tears that were almost tranquil André's tears of rage, while maddened at the idea that he was once more a prey to *The Other.*

"But I must find those bills," he said, starting up. "I want to return them. They are not mine."

"Return them? Did Prince Stalinski play with you, or with a phantom? He played with you. He lost to you. Give this money to the poor, if you wish. Lose it in another game with the prince. But you are not going to say that the man who was playing the other night was not you. What is your secret, André, *our* secret, my André, must remain between you and me. Allow nothing to be suspected. Let no one divine—and I will make a vow that we will drive away this person whom you call *The Other,* I promise, I promise, we will drive him away!"

"Yes, true, there is exorcism!" exclaimed André abruptly, in a shrill voice. "In the twentieth century! A man possessed! It's ridiculous!"

Suddenly, still haunted by the thought, his brows contracted:

"Where is this money? In the studio, I'm going there," he added, tearing himself away from Cécile.

She wished to follow.

"No, I beg you, let me go! I need solitude—I need to relax my nerves, to weep."

"Weep with me, it will be a pleasure like any other," she said, trying to laugh.

He was already on the staircase, rapidly ascending the steps, and, once alone, he tried to recall the past to his memory.

XI

THE MADMAN

ANDRÉ had no remembrance of the game of cards, the pocketbook which Cécile had seen in his hands. There was a gap in his life. And this rift was of no distant date—only from yesterday.

"Come, come—I came in here—I must have put the money into some drawer."

He searched and rummaged among the closets and the pieces of furniture. His memory gave him no aid. Clément's article might have been an invention from beginning to end, an invention that André would have found, as a reporter's romance, perfectly natural. No circumstance to which he could attach a past sensation returned to his mind. There was a gap.

In seeking the truth amid this obscurity, he felt fever gradually taking possession of him, the veins in his forehead throbbed, a sensation of vagueness overpowered him, as if objects had assumed fantastic aspects. It required an effort of will to maintain his calmness, to preserve his reason.

Then, suddenly, the money found in a portfolio where he usually kept his sketches, proved that the *Boulevard* reporter, inventing nothing, had stated a fact.

He counted the bills:

"Fifty-two thousand francs!"

Of the manner in which he had won them, André knew nothing. It was a sort of somnambulist, not a conscious person, who had played with Prince Stalinski. But in the presence of the absolute reality, the artist bowed, crushed by the evidence. For hours his usual life had been cut off. This human being of flesh and blood who was his *Ego,* had become the prey of *The Other.* It was *The Other* who had won the bank notes.

"*The Other! The Other!*"

André repeated the words aloud, looking around him as if he should have perceived the specter of his own person.

He held the bills in his fingers, crumpling them, asking himself if they would not suddenly become dry leaves, like the money the demon in the legends gives to those from whom he buys their souls.

"*The Other's* money!"

And this time, *The Other* might, in his mind, be his opponent, Prince Stalinski.

It seemed as if he were holding this package of

papers contrary to all law, that the sum was stolen.

"Come, where does this prince live?"

He searched in "All Paris" for the address. "*Stabad—Stabard—Stalinski* (*Prince Ladislas*) *70 Avenue des Champs Elysées*—"

"Good! I'll go there! I shall know what impression he had of me the other night!"

He put the bills into the pocketbook with his monogram, went downstairs again and asked for his hat and gloves.

Cécile was waiting for him.

"Are you going out?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"To Prince Stalinski's."

"Why?"

"I want to know what I said, what I did. What *He* did, *He, He,* the one who is *I!* Oh! the hideous buffoonery of it all! No, no," he added, as Cécile endeavored to calm him and to prevent his going out; "besides, the fresh air will do me good."

In fact, the walk really did drive away the sort of headache which contracted his forehead. He went on foot up the Champs Elysées, trying to forget, the eye of the landscape artist taking in with his gaze the long avenue of slender trees, like impres-

sions of Japanese prints, which ended in the fog at the gap made by the Arc de Triomphe. In the presence of nature the artist was regaining possession of himself. He reached Prince Stalinski's house, almost forgetting why he had come there.

Stopping short, he abruptly asked himself a question which terrified him.

"What am I to say to this man whom I scarcely know? He has played, he has lost. I can give him his revenge at the club. But why question him? Why, and about what? If he tells me that he thought me odd the other night, shall I inform him that I was not responsible for my acts, and the man who won his money was—what? A madman! No, I'll wait!"

He did not go up to the Prince's apartments. He would see him at the club. He began to walk, but this time aimlessly, quickening his pace, going toward the Bois, telling himself that the winter wind would quiet his nerves, and as he walked, returning as if urged by magnetism to the haunting thought: "He was not cured, not master of his acts and his thoughts, he was still the victim of this frightful psychoneurosis. For hours, in the midst of the club at a gaming table, among the Parisians who were watching the cards, he had been able, an amazing automaton, to play, to talk, to question, to answer, without even

the shadow of a memory of his remarks, his replies, his actions.''

''It is fearful, that is all, it is fearful.''

And now anger muttered, rising within him, anger directed against Dr. Chardin, who was guilty of not having told the truth, the physician who had deceived himself, who had deceived him.

''If I must return to this torture, fall back into this malady, why didn't he tell me that I must not, that I could not marry? He lied, he did not do his duty!''

Ah! yes, doubtless—as the unfortunate man had cried out to Cécile—Dr. Chardin had feared the nervousness of this madman who spoke of loading a revolver, on leaving the office, and ending everything at once. Dr. Chardin had had pity. He had refused to sentence a man to death. He had had mercy.

''Mercy on what? Mercy on an anguish which was a deliverance? I should be dead; it would be over!''

André plunged into the avenues of the Bois, walking rapidly, talking aloud, finding a charm in the deserted paths, the frozen atmosphere of a damp December.

It was one of those periods in winter when arthritis wrings like screws the limbs of rheumatic persons. This gray weather, this humid cold, falling from

dead trees, where drops hung as if the branches had been weeping, this mournful season pleased the artist, eagerly craving solitude.

He walked on and on, without knowing it, dwelling on his thoughts, impelled by them, and the keen consciousness of his powerlessness in the presence of the malady from which he was suffering, became more acute as he repeated the words: "He lied! The doctor lied!"

So, at every hour, at every turn, he was exposed to the appearance of this "double" who would expel him from his life. He would not belong to himself. He might smile at Cécile, and suddenly see a stranger start up between them? All that he had hoped for—recovery, forgetfulness—was impossible.

"Ill! I am a sick man! Ah! my father-in-law, with his dreams of success, his ambition for honors! The Institute! Poor General! Sainte-Anne will be your Institute, my little André Fortis! Sainte-Anne!"

He was growing excited in this rapid walk, which he desired to be fatiguing, as if he wished to conquer the body—to drive away the haunting, painful thought, which gripped him more strongly at every step: the possibility of being separated from this woman who was his wife, who bore his name, who was proud of it, and whom, with all the force of his

being, he worshiped as the ideal creature, the best and the most self-sacrificing.

Lose her! To be thrown some day into a padded room and leave her, a widow without being a widow, the widow of a living dead man, to a hopeless future, or to another man who might perhaps love her! An unreasoning jealousy—jealousy of the future—tortured him. Well, rather than endure such an obsession, live under this agonizing threat, it would be better to end it at once. After all, is this really living?

He went straight forward, like a wanderer, going beyond the avenues of the Bois, keeping on and on, not realizing the distance traversed, and even fatigue did not assail him in this constant hastening. He resembled a machine—one of those iron ones whose wild speed intoxicates the person who guides it. He felt—walking aimlessly on—a sort of madness of speed, the fever of the jockey who lashes his horse. And as he went, his excitement was taking a different form: the various objects, the houses, the trees, the landscapes steeped in fog, were transformed into unexpected shapes. He passed along suburban streets which were familiar to him, patches of undergrowth which he had studied, and yet he found nothing that wore its usual appearance. The houses seemed to be staring curiously, with open eyes, at the

passing stranger. The trees, blackened by the cold, stretched toward him gnarled limbs, menacing and hostile. Was it the haze, the approaching nightfall, the winter dusk—he did not know—but he had the vague sensation of being surrounded by darkness, enveloped by one of the dense, chill fogs through which he had sometimes passed in London.

On and on he went—gradually losing even the consciousness of his own personality. Before his eyes darted those swift, zigzag flashes of light that had formerly preceded the strange attacks from which Dr. Burke, and afterward Dr. Chardin, had declared him freed.

He now asked himself where he was, and what unknown town he was entering. An immensely wide avenue, with large trees forming somber masses on each side, was opening before him. Street cars were passing along it, sounding their signals. He had gone through an iron gate, dividing the avenue. People in military caps had looked at him, and the uniform of the customhouse officials had seemed as strange as that of foreign soldiers. At the end of the avenue, in the fog, the outlines of a huge palace blocked the view.

André knew that palace well. He had seen it before. Certainly he had seen it.

What was this building, which grew larger and

"He beheld, as if they were new apparitions, the bronze Tritons in the empty basins."

larger against the horizon at every step he took? Where was he?

He examined the houses bordering the avenue. Some, structures of the former century, towered above high walls that lined the way. Immense edifices rose, formal in style, with huge doorways, and carved armorial bearings. All this was well known to André. He recognized, too, yonder palace, appearing in a misty dream. It was Versailles. He was at Versailles.

What was he doing at Versailles?

He aimlessly continued his way. Now he was crossing the great empty square, swept by the winter wind. Walking straight forward, he entered the park, beheld as if they were new apparitions, the avenues, the horizons, the bronze Tritons in the empty basins, the vast garden depopulated by the cold, and this solitude amazed him. He felt as if he were visiting a cemetery. The statues of demigods, heroes, goddesses, on their stone pedestals, appeared like images of the dead erected on tombs. And the cold wind, the December blast whistling through the leafless trees, added a note of lamentation to this majestic sadness.

He was walking on, descending the green turf, when the feeling of hunger made him turn back, going instinctively toward the city. The famished beast

suddenly awaked in this wanderer. He would find a restaurant and stop there. He entered the Reservoirs by the door opening into the park, and sat down at a table in the great hall.

XII

AN AFFAIR OF HONOR

THE diners were sitting finishing their meals, chatting together—several Englishmen, a very fair young girl who bore a strange resemblance to Cécile, and the sight of whom brought to André Fortis's mind the question:

"Where have I seen that face?"

The new man he was becoming in this second state only vaguely remembered the woman who was his wife.

However, he felt a sensation of comfort in stopping his ambulatory fever, in resting, and he ate with an excellent appetite, irritated only by the noise made by his neighbors, who were talking gayly as they dined. Their laughing seemed sarcastic. He wondered if they were jeering at him.

Why? He did not explain it to himself. But he would have liked to be alone, to see no one, to hear no sound. Some young men at the end of the room, who had just got out of their automobile, appeared to be casting sneering looks at him. A pretty young

woman, of whom he could see only the nape of her neck and her black hair, turned toward him from time to time. And still that same question, that eternal question: *Why?*

Did he look ridiculous?

André felt a sort of constraint in knowing that people were glancing at him and was stirred by an impulse to go straight up to these strangers and ask them the question. Lines formerly heard, came back to his mind:

> "Zounds, gentlemen, I had no idea of being
> As amusing as I am! . . ."

Then his thoughts drifted toward memories of the theater which these words recalled and, for a moment, he forgot the eyes fixed upon him, the irony he imagined he had just seen. He felt an impression of relief, as if he had reached a pleasant halting place. In a sort of strange wave reality seemed to him enveloped in fog, but this fog had the charm of the light mists which look like thin smoke, a silver gauze.

He no longer troubled himself about his neighbors. Or rather he no longer troubled himself about anything. Without exactly knowing why he was there, in the agreeable warmth of the restaurant, he gave himself up to the feeling of comfort.

The meal over, André called for his bill, rose and went out, the waiter having put on his cloak. He left without yet knowing where he was going, and remained a moment standing on the threshold of the door, gazing at the broad, almost deserted streets.

While there an automobile entering the Reservoirs brushed against him and, from the vehicle, he heard a harsh voice suddenly shout:

"Take care, you fool!"

Instinctively he stepped back, pressing against the wall. A heavy red auto passed close to his feet, almost crushing them. André felt the irresistible wrath of the pedestrian who is threatened by a danger that apparently offers violence and insult.

The voice from the automobile seemed to him a brutal order, and he rebelled as if he had endured some personal affront.

He hastily walked several steps to the inner courtyard, where the motor car was stopping. A kind of Esquimau, clad in the skins of animals, descended, holding out his hand to a bundle of furs that looked like a shaggy bag, but which was a woman, probably a pretty one. The Esquimau had not removed the immense blue goggles which converted his face into a Neapolitan Punchinello mask, adapted to the American fashion.

"You might be more civil," said André, advancing toward the society Samoyede.

The two living bundles of fur changed nods which meant: "Where did this man come from?" and from beneath the mask and goggles issued a voice:

"What did you say, sir?"

"I say that you nearly ran over me just now, and your only apology was to speak to me like a lout."

The automobilist snatched away with his fur gloves the goggles that concealed his face, and a young man's countenance appeared under the skin cap, dusty fair mustaches beneath a well-formed nose, and very blue eyes under eyebrows gray with dust.

"I am not in the habit of being addressed in this way, sir," said the traveler. "I called to you in passing a warning addressed to a half-seen obstacle; but you are putting an evident meaning into your words, and you must take back what you have just said."

The woman muffled in her cloak, her head in a sort of gray hood, laid her hand, weighted with fur, on the shoulder broadened by the wolf-skin, and repeated imploringly:

"Henri! Henri!"

"I will take back nothing," retorted André, look-

ing the young man in the eyes. "Speed does not exclude courtesy."

"Sir!"

The arm, shaggy as a bear's paw, rose in an impulsive gesture, threatening André. But the artist, in his turn, repulsing with the same swift, instinctive movement the uplifted arm, brushed with his fingers the stranger's cheek, and the tourist, like a wounded animal under his bristling covering of furs, would have leaped upon him, if the young woman, terrified, had not stopped him by repeating the same cry, the same name:

"Henri! Henri!"

Besides, the noise had attracted the waiters. The chauffeur, in a goat-skin coat, ran up, there was a sudden silence, and the automobilist who had turned very pale, said, rummaging in his overcoat:

"I hope that we shall not stop here, sir!"

And, looking in his pocketbook, he handed André a card.

The artist did not even glance at it. He, too, gave his card, and bowing to the young woman who had shrunk against her traveling companion, said with a nervous gesture:

"Pardon me, Madame."

Then he went away, walking straight forward, without knowing where.

XIII

AFTER THE ATTACK

André Fortis found himself again—awoke would be the better term—on a wooden bench, in the chill dreariness of the station where a few travelers, who looked like shadows under the gaslight, came asking for tickets to Paris. He had arrived there an hour before, impelled by instinct, mechanically, and after being told that he had nearly forty minutes to wait, he had tried to kill time by looking in the dusk at the old polychromous posters of last summer's watering places, dull as vanished joys, and then sat down on the bench. Exhausted by fatigue, in spite of the meal which had just refreshed him, an invincible torpor stole over him, and falling asleep, he dreamed of some monstrous beast, some colossal cave bear stretching its claws toward him from huge shaggy paws.

There he had remained, drawing his garments over his knees, instinctively seeking the corner of the wall to sleep in peace. Heedless of the noise, the cold, perhaps rather lulled by the sound of footsteps,

the distant rolling of cars and carriages, he had remained in this restorative condition, which had passed into heavy slumber, until the moment when a sensation of sharper cold, an impression bordering upon pain aroused him—and his bewilderment was extreme upon finding himself in this station, without even suspecting how he had come there.

"Why, why, how did I get here? What has happened to me?"

He resembled a drunken man whose intoxication was dispelled, a sleeper awakened from a nightmare. He had gone to sleep in the second state which made him a different person: he awoke in the fullness of his own personality. The attack over, the dream was effaced. It was André, André Fortis who now had a clear perception of place, men, and things, of the setting in which his *Ego* moved.

And, by this very fact, he had realized that there had been a gap in his existence—that he had not come by his own will into this station, that it was not he, but *The Other,* who had arrived there.

How long had he been here? When did the terrible attack seize upon him? He remembered nothing. There was in his brain no image, however vague or fleeting, of what had occurred at the Reservoirs or elsewhere. His memory held no trace of the crossing of the Bois which had led him to Ver-

sailles. He awoke at night, in an unknown station, shivering with cold, his feet like ice, and his head aching—this was the sole perception he had of external life.

He recollected only that he had left the Rue Murillo to seek Prince Stalinski. Yes, but afterward? Afterward there was again a void in his life, and whatever had occurred—for days or hours he did not know—escaped him as if it had taken place in the existence of another person.

Then terrible, despairing grief shook his whole being. He had hoped for deliverance! He had believed that he could regain control over himself, escape the grip of neurosis. And so rapidly, at intervals so brief, the malady was returning, a jeering demon, to bury its talons in this troubled brain!

André stifled—in the presence of these people who might hear it—the sob that swelled his breast. He had only one idea: to regain his home, to find Cécile who, if he had been wandering days and days, must be waiting for him in despair.

But in the first place he must know where he was. He recognized this country station, the wooden staircase leading to the waiting rooms. He took a few steps outside, looking at the monument of commonplace style with the clock in the middle, luminous as the eye in the forehead of the Cyclops of whom Dr.

Chardin was talking the other evening at Madame de Vernière's.

It was the Versailles station. He had come to Versailles without even suspecting it. The time spent upon the wooden bench it was impossible for him to estimate. Only in Paris, from poor Cécile, could he learn how long it was since he had left the house in the Rue Murillo.

As for him, he knew nothing. A brutal interruption of his normal life, a substitution of a second existence for his customary one.

"Oh! wretch! wretch! is this living?"

The train was about to start. He asked for a ticket to Paris. For a moment he was afraid he had no money with him. What would have become of him, if he had found himself penniless in this place where, like a tramp, he might have knocked at the door of some friend, some artist of his acquaintance—or, if he had not dared—he would have resumed on foot, with weary limbs, exhausted by fatigue, in the chill night, the road to Paris.

He felt in the carriage a haste to arrive, to learn the truth more quickly. The winter horizons, bathed in the clear, cold moonlight, rested his artist eyes. Viroflay, Chaville, Ville d'Avray, his familiar spots, passed illumined by a spectral light, with the red windows of the houses that pierced the horizon. It

was not very late: nine o'clock. At ten, he would be at home, reassuring Cécile, who must be anxious. And, on reaching the Saint-Lazare station, he jumped into a cab to arrive more quickly.

The janitor told him that Madame was in the studio and, as he was tired, in spite of the rest in the car from Versailles to Paris, he took the elevator which went up to it. Opening the door, he lighted the electricity, and, wearied, he let himself drop on the yellow leather cushion.

"It isn't very high, but I will rest!"

The elevator rose slowly, and on the glazed door shadows danced during the ascent. On reaching the second story, André heard a door open, two figures, a man's and a woman's, were suddenly outlined upon the ground glass, and he heard Cécile's voice expressing thanks to someone. So she was not in the studio, as the janitor had said!

The two figures disappeared, sunk as if down a trap-door as the elevator continued to rise, and André still heard, though fainter and weaker, Cécile's voice. He went quickly out, sent the elevator down by pressing the electric button, and leaned over the railing of the stairs. Cécile, on the floor below, was again bowing to a thin, odd-looking little man, with very long white hair, who was descending, hat in hand.

André did not know the visitor. Some stranger. A picture dealer. Perhaps a customer!

He went down in his turn and joined Cécile, who seemed astonished.

Where had he been? she asked. She had waited. All through a long day, a whole evening, wondering if any accident had happened. Accidents sometimes come very suddenly in life. André explained that he had gone to Versailles—but without daring to speak of the new blank in his memory from which he had suffered, and of which, this time, he felt ashamed.

Then, in his turn, he asked:

"Who was that little old gentleman whom you were showing out and thanking?"

"That wasn't an old man. His white hair does not belong to his age. It was Dr. Klipper."

The name suddenly recalled to André's mind the conversation which had disturbed him at Madame de Vernière's, and he looked at Cécile in astonishment.

"Dr. Klipper, here?"

"Yes, I wanted to consult him. I had not been able to succeed in forcing the door of his laboratory. I wrote to him, and he came to apologize."

"Consult Dr. Klipper? For yourself?"

"No," she said, "for someone else."

André tried to laugh. But this name, Klipper, caused an uncomfortable sensation as if it might have awakened former suffering.

"And you told me nothing about it? You have secrets from me."

"I first wanted to know whether we could apply to this scientist, and Dr. Chardin offered to take us himself to Dr. Klipper. It was Dr. Chardin who gave me a letter of introduction to his brother physician."

"And I learn this only by chance, by overhearing a conversation through the glass door of an elevator —a regular vaudeville situation," he said, "or a drama. A husband returns and sees two Chinese shadows come out of his apartment. He springs out and kills. Or he gets a divorce. Othello in an elevator!"

He clasped Cécile's hands, touched by learning that she was thinking thus of him, but also anxious because she was uneasy. Well! since she had called Dr. Klipper, he would go with Chardin to consult him. Besides, he was curious to see this genius.

"If only I had come a little sooner!"

But he felt the necessity of no longer thinking of this haunting dread which Klipper seemed to incarnate. He even avoided answering the questions of Cécile, who was surprised to see him so weary,

his clothes dusty, his shoes gray, gray with all the dust of some long road.

"Have you walked a great deal?"

"A great deal. The air has done me good."

He avoided any explanation, having the tragical impression that he could account for nothing. He felt the need of spending under the lamplight, with Cécile, one of those evenings of soothing conversation in which, even while silent, people who love each other find supreme delight in being alone together.

"Are you hungry?"

André was not hungry. He would take some tea, if Cécile would have some, and there, together, she forgetting the day of anxious waiting she had just passed, he driving obstinately away every thought that led him back toward that cold waiting room at Versailles, they remained until a late hour of the night, happy in this solitude, amid the great nocturnal silence of sleeping Paris.

"To remain thus," said André, "to seclude ourselves every evening, after working all day, would be happiness!"

"It *is* happiness," answered Cécile, as if to recall the artist's restless mind to the reality of this halting place.

But, by a singular phenomenon of forgetfulness,

André was experiencing no anxiety. His whole existence seemed to him to be contained in the present moment. He concentrated in the soft enjoyment of an unexpected repose all the delight of tasting the exquisiteness of an impression snatched, stolen from his phantoms. The tea, whose steam ascended like a breath, the pretty thoughtful face, the mild blue eyes, so tender beneath the light cast by the large shade, this interrupted conversation, these very silences with the exchange of long, loving looks, seemed to him the life he had always lived. There was only this in the world. The rest disappeared, was effaced. A mist lighter than that resting on the trees in the Park Monceau, half-seen in the clear night, beneath the pale sky. Visions more fugitive than the steam issuing like vapor from the China cups. Nothing was real except this repose, this quiet evening in the familiar drawing-room, far from everything, beside the woman he loved.

"And you know," said the artist, "that I make my finest pictures as I am doing this evening, without touching a brush, while talking with you, dreaming by your side? Ah! the lovely visions, the fair landscapes, while gazing at you, placing you in my thoughts, in the midst of these imaginary canvases which I shall never make, perhaps, but which are much better than all that I have done!"

"But which the dealers would not want!" replied Cécile laughing.

"Oh! yes, they would want them, if they saw them as I do—that's the way with us all. We dream our best works. 'My finest pictures,' said Jules Dupré, 'I made for myself alone, sitting in my chimney corner, smoking my pipe.' I would gladly do the same while gazing at you, and looking at the steam from the tea-pot! Ah! how comfortable we are! I won't say that we are happy! That isn't wise—it brings ill-luck. But this sweet and pleasant evening! It is only such moments in life that count."

And after having fallen asleep with this feeling of exquisite quietude, André awoke the next morning with a zeal for work, a confidence and cheerfulness that restored Cécile's serenity, and reminded her of Dr. Klipper's words: "Let your husband believe himself cured, and he will be cured."

"I am going to get through a great deal of work, to-day, my darling," said the artist.

"Real pictures? Not the ones people make while smoking their pipes and watching the tea steam?"

"Naughty girl!"

He pressed a long kiss upon her eyes, as he used to do when they were engaged, and went up to his studio, alert, happy to live.

Ah! the joy of labor, the pleasure of setting his

palette, displaying his colors—to the artist, to feel the oil diluting the paste in the tubes, to the writer, to watch the ink flow from the pen upon the smooth paper, like blood from a vein. André experienced this joy in the fever of delight which the artist anticipates when, ardent and resolute, he has before him a day of work, good, free, alluring work.

He had placed upon his easel a picture which evoked, in a sort of apotheosis of sunset, the fallen Campanile, the Campanile of Venice, which will no longer be seen by the ships coming in from the sea.

He had seated himself on his stool, delighted to have long hours of solitude, in the activity with no touch of fever, of joyous work, when little successive raps, struck on his door, roused him from these first moments of active toil.

XIV

TWO UNEXPECTED VISITORS

He knew this sort of warning which Aurèle, his servant, had orders to use only on special occasions, when there was an important inquiry or some urgent news.

"Come in," he called, annoyed, foreseeing one of the inevitable visits which cut short inspiration and carry the mind far away from the cherished idea.

The man apologized, well knowing that Fortis's first impulse in such cases was a sort of nervous roughness.

"What is it, Aurèle?"

"Two gentlemen want to see you, sir," replied the servant.

"Two gentlemen?"

"I told them that you were not receiving; that you had gone out. They insisted, saying that they would come back again, and that it was absolutely necessary that you should tell them at what hour they could see you. They said: 'You will take him our cards.' Here they are."

Aurèle presented a tray containing two cards, which Fortis looked at while the servant added:

"Oh! they said, too: 'Inform Monsieur Fortis that we come from Monsieur de Morlière.' I thought it would be better to let you know, sir—"

André looked at the cards, repeated the name, *Monsieur de Morlière,* and again reading the other names engraved on the bits of pasteboard: *Comte de Lartiges* and *Major Vignal of the General Staff,* wondered what could be the meaning of this double visit from strangers coming from a third person.

"You are sure that these gentlemen really asked for Monsieur Fortis?"

"Oh! yes, sir; perfectly sure," replied Aurèle. "One of them, the taller, even said: 'He must be in his studio.' A proof that they know very well that you are an artist."

"Monsieur de Morlière. What Monsieur de Morliére?" said André Fortis aloud.

"Shall they come up, sir?"

"Show them up."

"Two men who come from a third," thought André; "they would not come in this way except for a duel. But, after all, two may also come to see pictures of which a third art lover has spoken."

He was in haste to learn the matter in question and, laying the palette on the stool, he gazed a little sadly

at the flaming sunset from which the unexpected visit snatched him.

Aurèle again appeared on the threshold, ushering in two very fashionably dressed men, who bowed to André in the correct manner, though somewhat formally.

This was no visit of art lovers for the purpose of inspecting pictures.

"We have the honor of speaking to Monsieur André Fortis?" asked one.

"Yes, sir."

He signed to them to sit down, drew forward an armchair for himself and, fixing his gaze upon them, rapidly studying them, waited.

One—the one who had spoken—was a man about fifty, bald, with mustaches that were still fair, a stiff neck, a blue cravat, and a slender waist, closely buttoned in a frock-coat of the latest fashion. He thrust his polished gaitered shoes forward while speaking, as if to show his feet, which were very small. An elegant type of the club man, the gentleman-sportsman.

The other, spare, gaunt, with a Don Quixote profile, and a mustache in the Russian style, was still young; doubtless a cavalry officer.

"Sir," he said, emphasizing his words, clipping them between his teeth, as if by a coquetry of diction,

"the name of our friend explains distinctly enough the object of our visit."

"The name of your friend?" asked André, slightly surprised.

"Monsieur de Morlière has requested us to demand explanations, or rather, since it is necessary to speak plainly, apologies for the quarrel which took place between you and him yesterday, at Versailles."

André listened, searching each word, like a man who was endeavoring to understand every syllable of a foreign tongue.

He found himself suddenly confronted by a reality which started up like some unexpected vision abruptly materialized. Of what, of whom had they come to talk with him? Who was this Monsieur de Morlière, and to what quarrel was this visitor alluding?

These two strangers were the seconds of some unknown adversary, whose existence he did not even suspect.

"Come, come," he said to himself, "let us summon all our coolness; let us keep our commonsense."

What he desired, knowing nothing of the matter for which these men came to call him to account, was to learn the cause of this arrival of seconds, without letting Monsieur de Morlière's representatives perceive that he was ignorant, absolutely ignorant of every-

"These two strangers were the seconds of some unknown adversary."

thing which constituted the object of their mission.

And it was like a sort of fencing in which André, without exposing himself, conquering himself by a terrible effort of will in order not to let them discover his amazement—his incredible ignorance of a fact in which evidently, certainly, he had been an actor without knowing it—trying to learn by bits a secret for which he was responsible without being aware of it.

"A quarrel with Monsieur de Morlière! I have not the honor of Monsieur de Morlière's acquaintance," he said coldly.

"We know perfectly well that you are not acquainted with Monsieur de Morlière—any more than he knew you yesterday. Personally, at least," said Comte de Lartiges, "for our principal was not ignorant of the name of a famous artist. But, though the offense may not have been directed voluntarily against the Vicomte de Morlière, it is none the less an offense, and, in a lady's presence, it assumes a sharper character, for which our friend, I repeat, requires satisfaction."

"I am ready to give Monsieur de Morlière any satisfaction he may desire," said André, conquering his agitation, "provided he will tell me in what way I have offended him!"

The major, who had not opened his lips, interrupted with a touch of rudeness:

"What, sir, because an automobile brushes past you rather closely and you don't get out of the way quickly enough, someone shouts—rather sharply perhaps, too sharply, if you choose—a call, an epithet that displeases you, and you reply with a gesture, almost grazing the cheek of a man whom you do not know, who has, it may be granted—to put things at the worst—nearly run over you, but whom you grossly insult, and you ask in what way you have offended Monsieur de Morlière!"

André Fortis's eyes never left those of Major Vignal. He was trying to read in them what the soldier did not say, the complement of that scene of whose full details he was ignorant, and which was being revealed to him as if it had been enacted by another.

That eternal thought, *The Other, The Other,* was returning to his mind. *The Other* who had contracted the debt which these men came to ask him to discharge.

That terrible gap in his life yawned wide, full of mystery.

"Are you certain," he said slowly, conquering himself by a powerful effort, keeping down his throbbing heart, trembling lest he should appear terrified when he was thunderstruck and, as it were, dazed—"are you very certain that I made, really made this gesture, impulsive in any case?"

"The employés of the Hotel des Reservoirs witnessed it," said Comte de Lartiges.

"And we are astonished that you should seek delay in this manner," added the major.

André, resolved from this moment to screen the culprit, in order not to betray himself by an avowal which which he would have considered a disgrace, answered curtly:

"Pardon me, I am seeking no evasion—I am asking exactly what took place between Monsieur de Morlière and myself. That is all."

Monsieur de Morlière's seconds looked at each other in some little surprise.

"Well," said Major Vignal, "though I have already specified, I will state the facts still more fully:

"Yesterday at quarter of seven, in the Rue des Reservoirs, Monsieur de Morlière, returning in an auto from a ride with Madame de Morlière, shouted to you: 'Take care, you fool!' You went toward him when he got out of his machine; remarks were exchanged; you raised your hand against him, and you took the card he handed you, giving him yours in return."

André was thinking: "I did not find that card. It must be still in my clothes."

Comte de Lartiges held out to André Fortis the bit of pasteboard bearing the artist's address.

"This is certainly your card, sir?"

"Certainly."

"*André Fortis, Rue Murillo.*"

"That is my card, my name, and my address."

"Then, sir, we have only to return to the object of our visit: Monsieur de Morlière demands, as we have had the honor of telling you, either formal apologies or satisfaction by weapons."

André smiled. He was beginning to find this tragical situation ironically comical; a human being becoming responsible for certain acts of which he was not even conscious.

"To fight for another person!" he thought.

This idea was passing through his brain while answering these two men, seated in his studio, requiring either apologies or a meeting:

"After all, this is war! The poor men fight for others and for the faults of others."

"Gentlemen," he said, "if I have, by an impulsive gesture, insulted Monsieur de Morlière, whom, I repeat, I do not know, I will express to you my sincere regret. But do you think I owe the apologies which you demand, you will admit, in a somewhat imperative tone?"

"Our principal's tone," replied the major, "is on a par with your gesture."

"Regret would not suffice," said Comte de Lartiges, as if regretting it himself.

"And these apologies would consist—?"

The major completed André Fortis's question.

"In a letter in which the apologies required—"

"Or requested," said the Comte.

"Would be clearly and formally expressed."

André had vainly placed, in a certain way—as a shield—his own person before a sort of specter. He said to himself wrathfully that the apologies made should be by that Fortis, whose card Comte de Lartiges was still holding in his hand, and the bare idea of signing his name to such a letter made the blood mount to his brow, as if in a fever of wrath.

"No, gentlemen," he said, "I repeat that I am deeply grieved over what has happened. A reflex movement, and nothing more. But it is impossible for me to write the letter you require or request—the expression matters little. I can deplore the fact, I can declare that the gesture was, as it were, mechanical, without having obeyed my will. I can neither do nor say more."

"Sir," replied Comte de Lartiges coldly, "when we lose control of ourselves as you have done, we pay the debt of our impatience or our unconsciousness."

Without knowing it, he uttered the word which was the key of the situation.

The conscious man was paying the penalty for the unconscious one.

"A debt to pay?" said André Fortis. "Well, sir, that is what I am going to do!"

"By apologizing?"

"By placing myself at Monsieur de Morlière's disposal."

"We shall have the honor of expecting your friends!" said Comte de Lartiges, bowing.

"Our compliments, sir!"

They went out with the same official correctness of deportment, the same bows which had marked their entrance; and Fortis, a little dazed by the adventure, found himself alone confronting this singular situation, which he was forced to endure without having created it.

There could be no question of any explanation or attenuation whatever with the seconds he intended to choose. He would have blushed to confess that, in certain hours of his life, he suddenly became irresponsible. No. He would admit the insult offered to Monsieur de Morlière and he would fight to make amends for it. Only he wanted to end the affair quickly, very quickly, fearing that the nervousness caused by this absurd chance might bring on another attack.

Suppose, for instance, that just at the moment of going on the ground, *The Other* should reappear, should again take possession of his being? What if

this *Other,* who had no consciousness of his acts, should draw back from his own responsibility? What if *The Other* should not go to the meeting accepted by him, Fortis?

It was because this incredible complication was possible, that André, brave to recklessness, dreaded lest another who might not possess his courage should take his place. He did not know this automaton who, at certain moments, became his double, his living, very much alive phantom."

"Come, come," he said to himself, "don't think of that. I feel that I am master of myself. Haste is necessary, that is all, and no one must have the least idea of this anxiety."

He would not even say anything about it to Cécile. Why disturb her? If he were wounded, she would learn the truth soon enough. He asked two friends at the club, an artist as famous for his skill in fencing as for his forceful, decorative portraits, and a captain detailed for duty at the Admiralty office, to make arrangements with Comte de Lartiges and Major Vignal for a meeting.

Monsieur de Morlière being the offended party, chose pistols. André Fortis would have preferred the sword. They were to fight with pistols.

André, up at daybreak, had spent the morning in writing to Cécile his last wishes, which were afterward

sealed and put into a drawer of a little Hispano-Moorish cabinet. Then, with a mind perfectly free, driving away by a violent effort of the will the haunting thought of a possible and sudden interruption of his normal life, he took an automobile with Petrus Hardy, the captain, and Dr. Wyns, the surgeon who was to be present at the duel.

On the way, in spite of the noise of the machine, they had talked together. Dr. Klipper's name had chanced to be mentioned in the conversation.

"Ah! yes, a madman," said Wyns. "But a madman of genius. He is one of the persons who oscillate between the Pantheon and the padded cell, and who are capable of working miracles."

Then Fortis saw again, in his mind, the outline of Klipper descending the staircase in his apartment house. Cécile must have spoken to him. If the duel was not fatal (everything happens, alas! and the bullet is more wild than man) he would consult Klipper; he would ask the madman the remedy for this kind of madness.

Monsieur de Morlière and his seconds had already arrived at la Sablonnière de Viroflay, the meeting place fixed the night before. André, descending from the automobile, saluted his opponent, and turning up the collar of his overcoat, took his station at the spot indicated, Petrus Hardy having measured the dis-

tance, and Major Vignal being appointed to give the signal for the duel by clapping his hands.

Monsieur de Morlière fired first. André, with a little emotion, heard a slight, sharp sound, like the report of a child's toy, in the damp air of the December morning. Then, having to return the fire, he raised the barrel of his pistol in the air and pulled the trigger.

The report must state, according to form, that two bullets had been exchanged without result. But, with charming courtesy, Monsieur de Morlière advanced to André, who politely took his extended hand.

"I now have the right, sir," he said, "to express my regret for a movement for which, it seems to me, I am not responsible, and I beg you to believe in my sincerity."

"I should have been deeply grieved, sir," replied Monsieur de Morlière, "to wound a man whose talent I admire, and I hope we shall see each other again in some other place than the Reservoirs, or la Sablonnière!"

They bowed to each other. The naval captain remarked that on the very spot where, thank Heaven, the meeting had just ended with shaking of hands, a student had been killed by his friend one autumn morning.

"There, by a pistol bullet. I saw the place still marked on the sand."

"And why did he fight?"

"Why does anybody fight? Why was this duel with Monsieur de Morlière? For nothing."

André returned to Paris very happy. He seemed to have one veil less before his eyes. Not that this duel had made him uneasy. What must happen would happen. He was a bit of a fatalist. But the pain of telling himself that it was really *He* and not an *Other* who must go to this meeting was at last dispelled. He had even been able to prove to himself that his coolness had not deserted him a single instant.

He had asked Dr. Wyns:

"Feel my pulse."

And in a low tone:

"Does it beat faster?"

"No—it is very quiet."

And his brain also maintained the most complete clearness. During the time that Monsieur de Morlière was leveling his pistol at him, he had noticed the effect of a black outline of the human figure on a winter landscape. The artist only, in that moment of danger, was interested in what was passing around him, the man had not had a moment's faltering.

Yes, one moment. In thought he had seen Cécile—

Cécile all alone in the house on the Rue Murillo, waiting for him without knowing that, at this very hour, he was risking his life. And if his antagonist's ball had struck him, he would have fallen while sending a last farewell to the woman he worshipped.

He embraced his wife with an almost sorrowful overflow of tenderness when he saw her again and she, divining that some new trouble had entered his life, questioned him, wished to know it, smiled, entreated.

"What is there new? You are hiding something from me."

"No. Nothing. Later."

Taking the fair head between his hands, he covered her face with kisses, repeated the eternal words: "I love, I worship you!" and no longer saw, forgot the specter that sometimes assumed his name, his form, his mind, his life—

But one idea, one vehement desire took possession of him, and, in his turn, he wanted to question Cécile.

"I have something to ask you myself," he said gently.

"Speak, dear love."

"Why did you call Dr. Klipper?"

She smiled, a little embarrassed and sad, as if she were afraid of wounding him:

"You know very well—"

"Yes, yes, I divine!" he replied. "And I, too, am

thinking of this man! A madman, they say. It is possible. What should I care if he cured me? There is also a moral—cerebral homeopathy. And the genius is he who goes farther, who mounts higher, who sees what others do not see! I will go to Dr. Klipper's house!"

XV

THE TWO "MANNERS" OF ANDRÉ FORTIS

Besides, a new source of bewilderment induced André Fortis to call someone to his aid again. One morning, in his studio, he found on his easel a canvas, placed there by some unknown person, which alarmed him. A sinister vision, something like the terrifying symbolism of modern life; an automobile hurled through space, piercing the sky with its burning eyes and grinding into a sort of bloody pulp a mass of crushed bodies.

Fortis had seen such paintings by the old masters imagining in their visions last judgments, hells, apocalypses. Formerly he had smiled at the fantastic inventions of the artist Wiertz, representing, trying to fix upon canvas the last thoughts of a suicide or the supreme terrors of a man who is to be decapitated. But who, entering his studio, could have replaced on this easel his usual landscapes, his exquisite woodland scenes, or melancholy Venetian views, by these funereal images?

By whom was this canvas, illumined by a spectral

lights, with spots of color as dazzling as arc lamps, a sort of wager, a duel of intensity between the palette and the electric light? What hand had placed there this savage evocation, this apotheosis of matter, dashing out brains, crushing bones under the wheels of a monstrous iron machine as, in an attack, the corpses of the combatants, horribly disfigured, frightfully heaped, are piled upon one another in attitudes at once comical and terrible?

There was, in these scenes of horror, in which André did not recognize the manner of any artist whom he knew, a rare power in the handling of the appalling spectacle, in the sight of a frightful dream. The automobile, animated by a terrible speed, seemed actually to advance toward the spectator. The canvas had the fearful magnetism of the machine, which grew on the way and seemed to swell, to distend, to enlarge at every turn of the wheels, with its huge locomotive eyes.

The artist who with sinister coloring had fixed such a nightmare, was, in the hideous, a master of his style.

No one had entered the studio. And Cécile had not purchased such a vision of horror.

Perhaps some painter, in search of purchasers, had sent his canvas to a colleague, to have an artistic opinion or some material assistance. André inquired. No, no one had come.

Then he went back to his daily anxiety; he asked himself tragical questions, as a man ill with intermittent fever would feel his pulse.

Since the adventure of his duel, days had passed, during which he had endeavored to reconstruct that scene at the Hotel des Reservoirs, of which no consciousness remained. He knew that Monsieur de Morlière was getting out of his automobile on the evening when the quarrel took place. And, remembering certain uncomfortable feelings, warnings that beset him on those last days—the fleeting flashes of light, the sort of heaviness, of pleasant torpor on the right side of his skull—he said to himself, with fresh anger, a new dread, that some fit of this intermittence of his life must have seized him without his being aware of it. Perhaps it was during these attacks of absence of mind that, in this very place, the very spot where he usually worked with his own colors, his own palette, shutting himself up in this beloved studio which was his refuge, *The Other* had come to cast upon the canvas these fantastic scenes of cruelty, terror, and blood.

Reasoning with implacable logic, studying in his sound condition the acts which he might commit in the second state, he explained, by the remembrance of the quarrel at Versailles the canvas where automobiling was becoming a sort of fierce Moloch. Impressed by

the flaming eyes of the machine, the artist had fixed the vision, tried to express the impossible, seized a nightmare in passing.

And what artist, if it were not he who had the right to enter here at all hours, who lived in this house, spent in this luxurious cell a portion of his life?

Before this almost insane picture, André remained stupefied, as much disturbed in his moral being as he could be materially in his body. What a challenge to every endeavor of Art was this division of talent in the same individuality! A poet here, a visionary there! A landscape artist drawing from Nature the charm that she reveals to her chosen ones, and a seeker of chimeras, grappling in some way with untranslatable subjects, visions à la Callot where the metal monsters of contemporary industrialism play the part of winged dragons, animated toads, or the caricatured demons of the engraver of the temptations of Saint Anthony.

Thus the same brain could conceive scenes so different! The art of this mad genius who yonder hurled an automobile over corpses was the negation of that of the artist who, with a bit of landscape, the corner of a village, a first star kindling in a pale sky, awakened in the soul a whole world of exquisitely sweet dreams.

A sort of sorrowful irony made André's lips voice the thought:

"The two *manners* of André Fortis."

He was trying to jest with himself, but he felt a mournful anger in knowing that he was thus condemned to this sinister duality.

Then he rummaged the studio, opened portfolios, closets, searched the dark corners to find in them perhaps other sketches, other canvases of that "André," who was not he. Behind a large oak chest, as if hidden from all eyes, he at last discovered the "Golden Calf" which had terrified Cécile, that fierce allegory of the power of wealth, that composition which resembled a hypnagogic vision, a sick man's dream, realized by an artist seized with fever in some padded cell.

The temptation abruptly seized him to destroy these canvases, burn them; then a singular scruple stopped him, a strange, ironically unexpected feeling.

"Have I the right to convert these works into smoke and ashes? If they are by my hand, by a self whom I do not know, are they mine?"

The artist's respect for the labor of another artist, for a work of art, be it what it may, imposed itself upon this man in the presence of these productions that were doubtless from his hand—but which did not belong to him, which came from others, made no part

—even if he had created them, of his work or of his life.

Instinctively speaking aloud, as if answering himself, he said:

"I do not believe that such a doubt was ever, ever imposed upon a man!"

Yes, these productions of an alarming paroxysm belonged to *The Other*. These extravagant compositions had a master, who might be the creature who, at certain hours, substituted himself for André. Yet had André Fortis the right to destroy what *The Other* had created?

"Why, yes, I have every right," he said, raising the palette knife over these bloody visions.

He was going to cut, to slash. But he again drew back. No, it seemed as if he were attacking the work of a human creature. Besides, he wanted to keep these canvases to show them to Dr. Chardin, to Dr. Klipper. He felt within him the absolute necessity for ending this maddening double life. He was weary of these suppressions of his own personality by a being so unlike himself. He felt that, in the contemplation of these terrifying pictures, his ideas were mingling, growing confused, that a fever of madness, of unsettled thoughts was beginning.

What if, during a period when *The Other* was master of his personality, he should exhibit, send to the

Salon, under his name, these symbolical paintings? If, as he had been responsible for the gesture of that other André Fortis, he should also be responsible for those pictures inscribed in the catalogue in their alphabetical order: André Fortis? It would be maddening!

And now he was afraid, materially afraid, that what was really absurd in this future possibility might go to his brain, might convert his doubt to insanity.

"Ah! let me be snatched from this obsession! Let me be delivered! Let me be restored to myself. I have enough, too much of this. I want to escape! I want to recover myself! Recover myself or end my life."

The former temptation, the morbid temptation again seized upon him. Why not die? Suicide was so simple, so prompt, so easy!

But could not this man, this mad genius, cure a madman? André believed in the exorcism of science.

"What if I should tell Dr. Klipper everything?"

PART SECOND

I

THE LABORATORY

Dr. Klipper!

Since André Fortis had heard Dr. Chardin, and then Dr. Wyns, speak of this singular man—this oddity in medicine—he had had but one desire, to place his fate in the hands of this seeker of the impossible. And Cécile had had the same thought, since after having written to him a beseeching letter, she had consulted the scientist. The difficult thing was to enter the Klipper house. In this great, noisy, restless Paris, hurrying, starving, eager for wealth, work, fame, the dreamer of the infinite was obstinately pursuing his task in a corner as unknown as a forgotten cenobite's cell, though in the very heart of the distracted city.

There was in the tumult, the formidable jostling of this city of climbers, politicians, financiers, brewers of news, brewers of jobs, intriguers, actors, courtiers, courtesans—one sacred corner where, finding absolute calmness in strenuous toil, continuous labor, a man suspected by men of science of pursuing certain dis-

coveries that would surpass the most amazing ones of a period accustomed to marvels, spent his days, passed his nights in a laboratory where no one had penetrated—a scholar of another epoch, a foe to advertising, eliminating from his life everything which could divert him from his goal—crouching in his home, cloistered in his work, nourishing his body just enough to maintain the health of his mind—the free brain, the sound thought, wrestling with Nature, mad to snatch from her a secret she was guarding like a miser, as if there was a continual duel between them.

And it was to this man, to this somewhat fantastic and Hoffmannesque being, that André Fortis was going to ask his cure, the help that Dr. Chardin's professional science did not give him.

But he did not want to displease Chardin. He would not attempt anything without informing the physician and, before seeking Jean Klipper, he returned to consult the scientist in the Boulevard Haussmann, found himself in the room where he had waited, in a mood so excited, so impatient, on the eve of his marriage with Cécile.

"Why, what is it?" asked Dr. Chardin, noticing his embarrassment and hesitation.

André was afraid of wounding him by speaking of Klipper. But Dr. Chardin, a free thinker, interested in everything, began to laugh, saying:

"You remind me of the people who, tired of the prescriptions of some prince of science, go to consult a bone-setter! And I don't blame you. I've often been tempted to ask some old woman's remedy for myself. You think that Dr. Klipper has special remedies? Go and see Dr. Klipper! And as he does not open his door to everybody, and I have some influence with him, I'll give you a line to this oddity. Listen to him, and see him. It's worth while."

Seating himself at his desk, Dr. Chardin had dashed off a few words on one of his prescription blanks, addressed to Jean Klipper, saying to André:

"This will serve for a *Sesame!*"

He put the address: "*Dr. Klipper,* 4, *Place de Valois,*" and added on the envelope: "*From Dr. Chardin.*"

"And you'll keep me informed, my dear sir?"

Fortis had hastened to see this Dr. Miracle. For a singular and, as it were, fantastic malady, it seemed to him that he needed a peculiar healer, out of any category, such as the Strassburg physician had been described to him. He quickly sought Dr. Klipper's residence.

And, remaining an artist even in these visits, he experienced an unexpected impression, the joy of the sight-seer, in seeking in the old quarter where the scientist lived, the house Chardin had designated.

André, like the majority of Parisians, did not know Paris; he knew only the Paris of his customs and friendships. He had crossed the Palais-Royal a hundred times without stopping at the ancient Cour des Fontaines, where he was going to find Klipper. He was utterly astonished in passing through the Passage Henri IV, dark, narrow, with bags of coal, vegetables, black walls, puffs of steam coming out, warm breaths from a factory, gratings of gutters, a passage strangulated like the hernia of that great solemn Cour, the Cour des Fontaines, where, in the Place de Valois, pierced by various passages, he was going to meet the doctor whom the reporter of the *Boulevard* had vowed to unearth.

What! It was in this quarter that Klipper had established his laboratory—yonder, two steps from that passage leading into the vast arcade of the Rue des Bons-Enfants, which seems like the opening of a yawning market door—the gaping vault of a central staircase whose stories are seen one above another as, in the back of a chimney, through the huge opening, the flues ascend. It was in this black block of houses, with retail wine-shops, pieces of butcher meat hung from hooks, this corner of old Paris, dark, muddy on rainy days, with grated windows, gratings at the entrances of the passages, dark by night and by day—and of dwellings also keeping the solemn aspect of a majestic

Paris, a Paris of luxury and power—of lofty houses with tiled staircases, resembling convents or barracks, and huge slate roofs crowning the high stories of gray stone. It was in this Paris of Louis XIV, invaded, hustled, flecked by the laboring Paris of the Twentieth Century, a Paris abolished two paces away by the bustle of life, the crush of the excitement of the Louvre, the Rue de Rivoli, the Paris of the autos and the Metropolitan—it was there that Dr. Klipper pursued the investigations of which the professional scientists spoke in low tones as if they were discussing miracles.

André Fortis had imagined Klipper working in the shade of the Sorbonne, yonder in some alley of the old Latin Quarter. But there, in the tumult of the Rue Saint Honoré, so near—and so far—from the Institute; there in this gloom and doubtless in a cellar, where printing offices alone recalled thought, cerebral labor, it seemed a wager, a paradox. But everywhere the man who is pursuing his dream can render himself solitary.

Besides, the Place de Valois, the Cour des Fontaines, solitary, silent, where the passing of a carriage becomes an event, was to Klipper like a corner in a provincial city where it would not have been supposed that a scientist had taken refuge, in the very heart of an unknown Paris.

4, Place de Valois!

André had sought the dwelling. It was the one that seemed to be connected with the buildings forming the first arch of the Passage Henri IV. A high house, with a broad staircase and iron railing, whose windows opened upon the square itself, facing the palace.

He asked for Dr. Klipper. The janitor, sitting in his room, appeared astonished. Dr. Klipper was not there, and then Dr. Klipper did not receive anyone. Not anyone. But the visitor had a letter that must open every door.

"Go to the second floor, and knock," said the janitor with an expression of doubt.

André ascended the two flights of stairs; it seemed to him as if he were climbing the steps of some abandoned seignorial mansion. Upon the landing, with a red-tiled floor, two doors opened, one—an unexpected thing—bore the name of a sporting paper which was printed there and gave the tone to fashion; the other, nameless, must be that of Dr. Klipper.

He rang the bell. No one answered. He rang a second time; the door opened as if it were bolted inside, and a very old woman servant, with an Alsatian accent, asked André what he wanted.

"Dr. Klipper!"

"He isn't here."

"I have a letter for him—"

"Leave it with me; I'll give it to him."

"I must give it to him myself."

"He is not here."

But André was determined not to withdraw without having seen the doctor. He insisted, saying that the matter was serious, and that the very important letter came from Dr. Chardin. The name was doubtless known to the old Alsatian, for on hearing it, she softened and said: "Oh! well!"—then opening the door which she had held ajar:

"If the gentleman will come in, I'll tell Madame!"

II

DEAD EYES

The maid admitted André, who, having crossed the anteroom, found himself in a drawing-room with lofty windows looking out upon the horizon of slate roofs in the square—a drawing-room of olden times, with the spaces above the doors ornamented with mythological paintings, a beautiful large Alsatian wardrobe, whose open doors revealed piles of books—and everywhere on the walls more books, old volumes with shabby bindings, the books of the investigator, and not of the antiquary or the bibliophile. On the walls were framed engravings representing the streets of Strassburg in former days, the cathedral of red stones, the statue of Kleber, a defile of French soldiers—marching before houses on which storks were perching.

André was looking at all this with the swift, circular glance of artists, when the door of the drawing-room opened and a young woman entered, a very pretty, very fair, very pale young woman, with large blue eyes that stared straight before them with a

strange fixity. She was small, dressed in black, but what attracted the painter's notice at once was the golden hue of the hair crowning a face of sorrowful sweetness, and the very small, very delicate hands which she stretched before her, as if seeking some support.

She was an exquisite vision, still retaining something of the young girl, the child, with a caressing charm, a tender voice:

"You have come from Dr. Chardin, sir?"

"Yes, Madame."

"The doctor can refuse no request of Dr. Chardin, who has been very kind in speaking of my husband at the Academy of Medicine. But the doctor is in his laboratory and, when he is working, he receives visits reluctantly. Oh! very reluctantly. What name shall I give him, sir, when he comes up?"

"Monsieur André Fortis."

"Ah!" she cried.

She smiled vaguely, while her beautiful blue eyes, fixed upon André, continued to gaze at him without any change of expression.

"You are Monsieur Fortis? Ah! sir, Madame Fortis has already wrought a miracle. She induced the doctor to leave home and pay a visit. It is the rarest thing in his life."

When she said *"the doctor,"* her voice, exquisite in

tone, assumed a peculiar expression of respect. Reverence, affection, a feeling of devoted, absolute admiration, were in this musical way of pronouncing a very simple word.

"And I must tell you," the young wife added, "that the doctor, who is too much absorbed by his work to take any patients, is interested in you. Yes. And in Madame Fortis, whose sadness touched him. He told me so. We have no secrets and, though ignorant, I am the confidant of his investigations."

André had taken from his pocketbook Dr. Chardin's letter.

"If you will look at this letter of introduction—"

He held out the sheet to the young wife. But she answered gently, still smiling, her beautiful eyes, the color of cornflowers, fixed on vacancy:

"Then you do not know? I cannot read the letter."

"Why?"

Without sadness, she answered quietly as if it were the most natural thing in the world:

"Why, because I am blind."

André had allowed an *ah!* of pity to escape, and was beginning a sentence which she interrupted with a gesture of her pretty hand:

"Oh! it isn't any more sad than other things! And then—"

She added, speaking to herself—her eyes seeing nothing of what surrounded her, but her inward vision perceiving in some way, in a distant apotheosis, a deliverance, a light:

"And then, the doctor is there! The doctor is seeking! He will find it! I shall see some day! I shall see!"

She had spoken in her musical voice, as beings of faith must speak, following the Master. And Fortis felt touched, and also cheered in the presence of this suffering thus expressing the certainty of being consoled.

If the blind woman believed that Klipper could restore her sight, why should he not have hoped that he could cure a neurosis?

André gazed at the young face, keeping on the lips a smile that was not even resigned, but happy, which certain blind persons have, as if their blindness snatched them from the sight of human ugliness, and —he had noticed it at once—he saw in the middle of the very white forehead a reddish-brown spot, round as a large medal, which appeared there like a mark of dregs of wine, but seemed more like a scorch, a recent wound.

The young wife, who did not seem to suffer from it, added:

"Will you follow me, sir?"

She went as straight as if her eyes had guided her toward the mantelpiece, where she took a little lantern whose candle she lighted without hesitation. André, from seeing her actions, would never have suspected that she was blind. As if she had divined his thought, she said a little sadly:

"Habit!"

She held the lantern in her hand.

"It is not for myself, I can find my way on the staircase without seeing, but for you who could not see —for we are going into a cellar. The cellar of this house is the doctor's laboratory."

She passed in front of Fortis, and the artist admired the graceful carriage, the unhesitating step of the blind woman, and the sorrowful smile, resigned, yet tender, on the virginal face.

They went down the broad stairway, the young wife holding by the iron railing, to the lowest story, where, groping with her hand along the wall, she pushed open the door leading to the stairs in the dark. To light the somewhat worn stone steps of this new subterranean staircase, the lantern was useful to André. Madame Klipper guided herself by the facing of the thick solid walls, absolutely free from dampness. And the artist, thus preceded by this blind woman bearing a light that she could not see, had a vague feeling of living for the moment a scene of some fantastic tale,

passing through a dream of a Hoffmann, a Poe, a Hawthorne.

They went down a few steps. The cellars of the house, which opened here and there, were commonplace, but at the end of a somewhat long corridor they reached a door apparently larger, closed by a heavy bolt, whose rusty iron shone in the light of the lantern.

III

UNKNOWN THINGS

THE young wife knocked at this door with little raps, evidently arranged in advance as if by a Masonic regulation. After quite a short interval, a man appeared on the threshold, lighted at once by the rays of the lantern which fell on his face in front, and by the dim glimmer of some air-hole that, coming from the rear of the courtyard behind, made a sort of pale aureola. Between these two different lights, small, thin, with long, very white hair framing a lean, smooth-shaven face with an eagle nose, a face in which eyes, strange eyes, fiery black, sparkled and burned with an inward flame—Dr. Klipper, muffled in a black overcoat, seemed like some creature of a dream, a being of a different time and race, forgotten there in the midst of modern Paris.

The face of the scientist, astonished at being interrupted in his work in the depths of this subterranean cell, expressed a sort of sullen anger, the mouth with scornful lips like that of the bust of

"The little man's terrible black eyes sought in the dusk for Fortis."

Machiavelli in the Uffizi gallery, puckering and beginning a sentence, when the young wife, in her sweet, musical voice, explained:

"It is Monsieur Fortis—André Fortis, of whom you spoke to me yesterday, and whom you wanted to see!"

Then the disagreeable, almost harsh expression of the face changed, and the little man's terrible black eyes sought in the dusk for Fortis to question him very quickly.

A subject! An extraordinary case! A phenomenon! Dr. Klipper would not disturb himself unless for exceptions which appeared before him as remarkable problems.

"Ah! ah!" he said with a slight Alsatian accent still preserved, "Monsieur André Fortis! Come in! Come in!"

André explained this eagerness to himself by Cécile's disclosures. She had consulted the doctor, and thus the explanations he might have to give the physician would be simplified.

The aritist found himself again the artist—almost forgetting that he was a sick man coming to consult a master—while looking at the frame which surrounded the scientist, the hidden corner where Jean Klipper was pursuing his discoveries.

André was experiencing the pleasurable sensation

of a journey in an unknown country, an unexpected meeting.

This laboratory of Dr. Klipper under the vaulted roof of the cellar in the old Parisian house immediately evoked the image of those dusty corners in which Rembrandt showed, in a strange dusk, alchemists and rabbis. Retorts were outlined against the wall, extended by tubes coiled like serpents; wires hung from the ceiling, clung to the partitions, started from some implement of singular aspect to end in some accumulator, electric wires that played the part of the spider webs in the pictures of the great Dutch magician—science thus arriving at the same picturesqueness as art.

And it was the scientist himself who had put up these wooden partitions, along which ran scattered flasks, this furnace, these china tiles, the whole scenery and appliances of this cellar cell, in which he shut himself, pursuing his dream, eager for the solution of the problems presented, living an intense solitary existence, a hunter crouched as if watching for the impossible among these instruments which he had constructed or perfected with his own hands, dark rooms of photography which he had made instruments of his investigations, and (André instantly questioned him and Klipper answered with the ingenuous pride of the man who feels that he

is admired in his works, his efforts) there, between the compressed air stored in a reservoir, the electric light perched upon a sector, the instrument which aided him to decompose metals by the light, Klipper had passed hours and hours, long hours for years in pursuing researches which seemed like conflicts with the impossible.

Daylight entered this subterranean laboratory only through the air-hole opening on the Cour de Valois. But between this light from the outside and the light from within, used by him, Klipper had placed a black canvas screen, which, when he needed it, made the darkness complete, permitted the scientist to work in the total gloom traversed by the light rays he produced.

André gazed, storing this vision in his memory. And, to him, it was at once a disturbing and pathetic scene—the little thin man as if lost in the jumble of these implements of copper and glass, among these retorts, these India-rubber tubes like black serpents—and this poetic young woman, so exquisitely pretty, standing there, her light in her hand, who seemed to be the Muse incarnate, the living Muse of this poet of science, toiling in the darkness to measure himself with the infinite.

"Then, my dear Master," said Fortis, genuinely moved, "this is the corner of the earth from which some scientific revolution will come?"

Beneath his long white hair, Jean Klipper uttered a little hard laugh.

"Oh! A revolution!—A revolution! I know that, because I live in a cellar, the professional scientists have jestingly called me the Marat of science. But I have no wish to revolutionize anything. I seek only truth, and truth everywhere. Yes, yes," he said, growing excited, gesticulating nervously, laying his thin fingers on his instruments, which he lovingly caressed, "I want to find in electricity and light all that Nature is hiding. The Rays, all these Rays that seem to issue from the earth are blazes of light which will illumine all the dark places. Radium is a symbol. And there are other radiums in the vast universe. There are other forces, other mysteries! All this will come forth, will be born, will live."

Then, as André asked to what special task he was devoting himself at present, Klipper shook his head.

"Oh! I am pursuing several hares at once," he said, a little banteringly in the Alsatian fashion, "but at the moment, this is what I was doing when you knocked—"

And, explaining that he was decomposing metals, casting on the wall the rays of the solar spectrum, he arrived at calculating the portion of such or such

a metal contained in the light of such a star, the rays of the sun, the planets of infinitude, the continents of space. So that he had there, in this cellar, the secret of the stars, the numberless spheres suspended in space.

He said, smiling:

"I am dissecting the stars."

And the little blind wife softly commented in her plaintive, tender voice:

"It would be pleasanter to go to them."

There was so much sadness and poetry in this sort of exquisite melopeia, that Fortis was moved by it.

Jean Klipper replied that she was making dreams, and he was pursuing science. Then, turning to his wife:

"You think as a poet; I calculate, I observe as a physician. And the fact, when I can prove it, sometimes attains an intensity of amazement which resembles the poesy of science, or rather, you see, makes science itself the infinite poesy of the future."

Klipper addressed himself by turns to the poetic woman, and to Fortis.

"The human heart and its recesses, Nature and her mysteries, two infinities, my dear little one, which will never, never weary the curiosity of man. I shall have perhaps discovered, sir, a few fragments,

a few atoms of truth in my long and well-loved labor, and I shall die before even having found the hundredth millionth part of what perhaps the generations to come will some day discover. It is infinity, this universe; it is the great boundless sea; it is the unknown country—deeper than the ether!''

He abruptly showed André one of the instruments in his laboratory.

''This wheel which turns, moved by compressed air, and which we hear turning, and you will see some day, I hope—'' he said, his voice curt, looking with fixed eyes at his young wife—''is making a thousand revolutions a minute. There are some which make six thousand. Do you believe that possible? It is. And the wheel is very small. Well! Imagine a gigantic wheel, moved by a colossal electrical machine, that giant wheel might make an entire world move. Perhaps some day it will be manufactured! Ah! we know nothing, nothing, nothing yet! But we are going to know, we are going to know! To know! To know! To know!''

He repeated the word with a wild expression. He was intoxicated by it as if it were a new kind of alcohol.

''To know! To know! To live to seek, to learn!''

He was growing excited, and André noticed in his

black eyes a sort of flame that seemed to have the glare of a madman's look.

But, as if the little blind wife, instead of divining, had actually seen, perceived this morbid flame, her voice interrupted, gently calmed this excitement.

"My dear, I beg you—"

"Yes, dear Marthe, you are right. Calmness. Nothing can be done without calmness."

Quivering and excited just now, he was suddenly quieted by the simple words of this woman-child.

Then, taking Marthe's little hands in his thin fingers, he said to her with deep tenderness, as infinite as his hopes:

"Leave us. I want to talk with Monsieur Fortis."

She turned to André.

"Here is the lantern, sir. You will only have to take it when you go up again."

"But you, Madame?"

"Oh! I believe that, not seeing the way, I am the one who sees it best."

The little blind lady smiled sweetly over her misfortune.

"And," Klipper then said in a firm tone, "a day will come when the blind will see—when the third eye will replace the closed ones! Everything comes with patience and faith."

"When there is genius," replied Marthe Klipper,

in the tone of boundless adoration, as in the fervor of a prayer.

André saw her retire, vanish in the gloom, like a vision in this fairy laboratory, with that red spot in the middle of her forehead which gave her the appearance of a living martyr. And it seemed to him that the little blind lady might have carried away the light, the light of her body replacing the extinguished light of her eyes.

IV

THE LIGHT OF HOPE

André was recalling to mind the strange remarks of the scientists who were relating at Madame de Vernière's the experiments tried upon the blind girl, the penetrating rays of light cast upon the forehead of a human being, with the certainty of slowly making emerge from it a hidden eyeball, living, luminous, replacing the extinguished ones, the dead eyes.

He followed with his gaze Marthe disappearing in the darkness of the cellar, and wondered whether this exquisite creature was a victim pursuing with a maniac, whose living subject for experiment she was, the "sorrowful dream" of life, or if she was, as she felt firmly convinced, a martyr destined to be saved, restored to the light by genius.

That word was to her the same as Klipper's name, as she had pronounced it: *genius.*

She put her whole soul into this hymn of trusting tenderness. And André, in his turn, gazed at the little alert, strange man, as if he found himself

in the presence of an unreal being, living a chimerical existence.

But the terribly alive thing in this singular person was the fire of his eyes, obstinately fixed upon André, who could scarcely endure their keenness. Klipper was seated on a stool behind the electrical machine which he was using when they rapped at his door and, with his elbows resting on the board that held the instrument, he was studying the visitor who came to interrupt him. His thin face, propped on bony hands whose fingers were thrust into the long silvery hair, assumed a fantastic, anxious expression, and amid the entangled electric wires, André thought of some strange human spider cowering in the bottom of his web, watching for prey. It was not, however, to devour, but to cure, that the watch was kept.

"I can't see you sufficiently well," said Jean Klipper, rising quickly.

He drew up the black shade which excluded the light outside, and through the air-hole filtered a bluish glimmer which gave this strange laboratory a still more spectral appearance.

"Put yourself in the light," said the doctor, who had resumed his place behind his instruments. "We have no occasion to go up to my office for what you

have to tell me, and a consultation among my machines does not alarm you, I think?''

''On the contrary, my dear Master.''

Jean Klipper shrugged his shoulders.

''Do not call me *dear Master.* The word is made commonplace by use at every turn; it is ridiculous. Dear Master! dear Master! Are there any masters? We are all pupils. We spell—poets, the alphabet of the human heart, scientists, that of science. Masters? There is only one master, who is an imperious, cruel mistress, Nature!''

While speaking, he was examining André, who enjoyed the interview as if it were a spectacle, mentally comparing the scientific lair of this odd person with Dr. Chardin's luxurious drawing-room.

''Sir,'' said Jean Klipper, ''Madame Fortis, in summoning me to her, used the name of a man who is very dear to me, and though I receive no patients, no, none, having too little time to live to carry out my personal investigations, it has been agreeable to me to study one case, interesting in many respects, your own. It does not directly fit into my studies. But everything relating to neuroses, to the brain, interests me deeply, and if I can collaborate with Dr. Chardin in your cure, I shall be happy. You are a living problem and, though you

may disturb me a little—yes, you do disturb me—I am delighted to see you.''

The little man, while speaking, had a slightly ironical smile upon his lips. The Alsatian accent was again quite apparent. He said *tirectly, acreeable,* and the accent gave his words a special zest. The *living Broblem* was listening and studying also.

Then Klipper questioned, as Chardin had done. André related his terrors, the obsession of his troubled life, the heaviness of the head, the sudden flashes of light which passed before his eyes as if announcing a storm, or rather a dense cloud, an interruption of existence. And Klipper, in the most natural manner in the world, as if these incredible phenomena had been absolutely trite, answered very coldly in a curt tone:

''Well, well. That is perfectly simple.''

''Perfectly simple?'' said André.

''Perfectly simple, because it is the confirmation, the proof of a fact that would astonish many people, but which is, to me at least, mathematical. Perfectly simple.''

V

THE UNCONSCIOUS SELF

DOCTOR KLIPPER shook back his long white hair. "Certainly, certainly," he said, "man is double; we must accustom ourselves to recognize this; yes, yes, it must be confessed, whatever our foolish pride may be. Have you read Myers? Evidently not. It is with him that we can see our *ego* is made up of two *egos,* the supraliminal, which is conscious of everything, and the subliminal, which is unconscious, lives an obscure and independent existence. These somewhat barbaric words tell you nothing, but they have now passed into current speech. There are two beings in our being; what in you is morbid, carried to paroxysms, is latent in those whom you elbow. There is within me an unconscious self that is listening to what I am telling you, and perhaps is dictating my words at this very moment. 'I count for nothing in it,' Mozart said to those who were complimenting him on one of his sonatas. It was the unconscious self that had dictated a masterpiece to his normal self, and you, since you ap-

peal to me, you are doubled, and you believe yourself a unique example of this dividing of your *ego*. You have a second life, a second self? But a certain Louis Vidé, studied by Bourra and Barot, had six different existences, six distinct personalities. Six! This cannot astonish you, I think; you are not going to cry out at the miracle, since you are yourself a living miracle! Six existences, six dispositions, six characters. A woman studied by Morton Prince, Miss Beauchamp, had three; Helene Smith, a subject studied by Flournay; Annel Bourne, whose case Hodgson has described, had gusts of distinct personalities as spontaneous as gusts of wind. The modifications were immediate. You spoke to one—another answered. Ah! the conscious and the unconscious self, the supraliminal, and the subliminal. Problems, mysteries! Schopenhauer speaks of certain moments in his life when his will seemed sleeping, when his mind was impelled in a direction seen beforehand. Have you read Schopenhauer much? Fine ladies have made him fashionable without generally understanding him. 'I myself,' he says in his own words, 'was unacquainted with the work.' On receiving his books, he asked himself: 'Did I write this?' It was he, but one would have supposed that someone else had dictated it!''

"I and the *The Other!*" said André who, while Klipper was speaking, experienced all the torture of former sufferings.

Then, with increasing fury, his wrath against that other, the robber of his personality, regaining all its violence, he asked Jean Klipper—as he would have appealed to a supreme sovereign—to tear him from this obsession, this possession, this torture.

"Ah! your science! Your science explains everything," he said bluntly, "but it cures nothing."

Klipper made no answer for a moment, then he said gently:

"I have told you that we were only pupils. Yet everything can be cured, if we so will. Do you want me to tell you where your remedy lies? In illusion!"

"Illusion?" André repeated.

"Everything here below is illusion in a certain order of things. Happiness? Illusion. We are happy only if we believe we are happy. Men condemned to the unforeseen, not to mention the foreseen, which is inevitable, are happy only through imagination. Say to yourself that this other who is in you does not exist, exists no longer, and he will never reappear. Your *double,* like your own personality, is illusion. Your art, which consists in putting ex-

quisite lies upon canvas, is illusion. Joy is illusion! Beauty is illusion!"

"Ah! Doctor, beauty is perhaps the most certain thing in the world," cried the artist.

"Who knows?" replied Jean Klipper, with his little ironical laugh.

Rubbing his hands, he added:

"We find beauty where there is precisely only illusion, the phantom of beauty. I could have la Joconde thought absolutely ugly, and the hideous Hottentot Venus, who, however, is ideal beauty to the Hottentots, perfectly beautiful! Aha!" said the little man, "if I wished."

"If you wished?"

The old Alsatian's black eyes darted flames.

"I told you that we are pupils, ignorant, powerless, yes, compared with the absolute, but we have power, we can do many things!"

He looked André Fortis steadily in the face.

"You are an artist? I am an artist, too, in my style. I could—"

He hesitated, then, as if in a triumphant avowal of his genius, added:

"I could make living portraits which would have only the shadow of an existence! Illusion! Sovereign illusion! To give for instance to a man who had married an ugly wife, the illusion of having

wedded a brilliant beauty! Oh! Certainly! Certainly! It would be an illusion, but what of that? Love lives by illusions. Illusions! Illusions! Love, like all the rest, is only an illusion!''

''An ugly woman can very easily please the man who loves her,'' said Fortis. ''It is quite simple. There is a mystery of attraction.''

''Oh! that isn't what I mean,'' replied Klipper; ''I mean that the woman may remain ugly, be utterly ugly, and that the man may see her very beautiful, absolutely beautiful—and this by means of spectacles which I would undertake to manufacture myself. Come, are you somewhat acquainted with physics?''

''Well! Well!'' said André smiling, all his attention strained to hear the disclosures of this man, a sort of priest of the Kabbala, buried in a Parisian cavern, like a kobold in his dark mine.

''I am going to try to explain the problem to you; you are an artist, once more, it will be easy for you to understand. Mirrors, sir, reflect perfect images, if their form is flat, and their surface well polished; these images become coarse and misshapen, as soon as the glass is out of shape and bends. You have seen the caricatures which they then unexpectedly give back to you?''

"Yes, certainly."

"When the curve is regular, the deformation is, too, and the effects which result can be infinitely varied. Certain skillfully constructed mirrors show us on a small scale—like an elegant miniature which they seem to beautify—the face that is presented to us. Others, more easily made, change the proportions, and produce the caricatures of which I am speaking, some widening, others lengthening the features. Incredibly swollen Sanchos, or Don Quixotes long drawn out and fantastically thin. These mirrors are the most simple. The effects can be infinitely varied. It is a geometrical problem, belonging to catoptrics. But we have dioptrics—Don't be alarmed. I am talking like one of Molière's pedants—"

"And I am as ignorant as Monsieur Jourdain," said André.

"Dioptrics is the science of rays refracted through a transparent medium. It presents more difficult problems and more varied solutions. Each point illumined, when seen through a transparent glass, is perceived in a different position from the real one, a position that depends upon the form of the surfaces which bound the magnifying glass on all sides. Well, if in the instrument, instead of one transparent glass, we interpose two, three, four,

six glasses, perhaps, between the eye and the object it sees, we can produce the strangest deformations, the most unexpected images, what we call anamorphoses. Understand me fully; if the object beheld is a square, its image could be rendered circular. Or, if this should be square, the eye would see a circle. By means of constructing an instrument, all the illusions, all the visions that might be desired could be given. We could cause what does not exist to be seen in a living being or at least modify what does exist."

"Actually?"

"Oh! of course, the problem would be difficult. Yet much less than that of squaring the circle. But to change, modify, improve a face, lengthen or broaden the oval, give the forehead more height, make the mouth smaller, etc., etc., would be only sport, mere sport to an ingenious and skillful optician in the presence of a bust always ready to pose, always motionless. He could—I could—by putting the glasses farther apart or closer together, by constantly polishing and repolishing them without causing the removal of the surfaces, show the spectator the features faithfully reproduced of a bust totally unlike the real one. For instance, I will undertake to give anyone who is looking at Æsop the pleasure of contemplating Plato, to anyone who

has before him a Megæra, the joy of seeing the Venus de Milo.

"Is it possible?"

"Very possible. Everything is possible," said Klipper.

It seemed to André as if he were living in a dream. Was he really awake? Would he not find himself cast suddenly into the midst of a dream? Was he conscious of his own personality?

Was this Dr. Klipper, strange, ironical, eloquent, nervous, with his black eyes glowing like flames, his nostrils breathing in life, vibrating like wings, his guttural accent, his curt gestures, really a creature of flesh and blood?

Of all the scientist had just said, Fortis remembered especially the last three words, the proud affirmation of a boundless power.

"Everything is possible!"

And the tone in which he had uttered this positive assertion gave the artist the certainty, that absolute faith which Klipper made the supreme force: illusion!

"I will cure! I will cure! Everything is possible!"

What had especially attracted the Alsatian doctor's notice in the artist's disclosures was the last adventure, the duel accepted for another—a man

giving satisfaction to an adversary for an insult he had not offered, a gesture of which he was unconscious—and Jean Klipper's ever active mind already saw in the complication of this episode a possible means for André to escape the obsession of which he was the victim.

"Good Heavens," he said, a little roughly, "I see that you are going to occupy more of my time than I should like. But you are not an ordinary patient! Your poor wife has interested me; she has touched mine—and then, besides—though you are not unique, I told you so—yes, yes, don't have the vanity of your suffering—I believe that something may be accomplished!"

"If everything is possible,—you said so, Doctor,—do the possible, and try the impossible! Make me become myself again—escape at last the grasp of *The Other.*"

"*Do, do,* I know *well,* I know *well. The Other* must be killed, that's all!"

Rising, Klipper added:

"Let me think it over! Come and see me again!"

"When, Doctor?"

"Whenever you please. I shall have reflected, calculated. Come back. You will always find me here, or almost always. I never go out; life is too short."

VI

THE THIRD EYE

André came out of this wretched laboratory with his heart full of joy. Hope is the human viaticum. While walking on, he repeated the old Alsatian's positive words: "Everything is possible." And, this time, the realization of this possibility seemed near. Undoubtedly he had had the same hope the day he had consulted Dr. Chardin. He had had faith. He had believed himself free.

But to-day the man whom he had just seen inspired greater confidence. The irregular of science would find the remedy of which the official scientist had only caught a glimpse.

Why did André trust more to this last counselor? Man requires successive little lights to guide him through the mist and darkness. One is extinguished by a gust of wind, another kindles. And the way ends when the last light, the very last, flickers and dies.

And to André this scientist shut up in the cellar of the Cour de Valois, "dissecting," as he said, the

stars, was a living light. Stars were those glittering black eyes which had searched, penetrated to the depths of André Fortis's soul. A star was the brain of this man, of whom Chardin said:

"He is a madman, but he is a genius."

When Fortis had gone, Jean Klipper left his laboratory and, after locking the door of his cellar, went up to his apartment.

He felt wearied; he wanted to rest. And his rest, all his pleasure, was in seeing the beloved creature who—with science—constituted his whole life and, moving to and fro near him, was the smile—a sorrowful smile—of his stubbornly austere life.

The little wife shared all his cares and—in spite of the blindness that seemed to shut her away from the world—remained, by a phenomenon of intelligent kindness, like the devoted maid-servant, very practical and very helpful to the scientist. She divined everything; she knew the place of everything in the apartments; she found on the library shelves the book Klipper needed. She laid the table, at meal hours, better than old Anna, the maid-servant.

Her husband often said to her:

"You have eyes in the tips of your fingers!"

The sense of touch, developed to extreme acute-

ness, as in many blind persons, was like a second sight.

"We might live very happily in this way always," said the scientist. "But no, but no, I expect, you hear, I expect that from your brow, this beautiful brow like an exquisite child's, will burst forth, emerge, the eye that will give you sight!"

While speaking in this way, he caressed with his thin fingers the pretty, fair-haired girl's smooth forehead, marking on it with his nail the very spot where that hidden eye, the complementary eye, the unknown eye which the human race possesses, could and must come forth.

Marthe, confiding, made no reply. She submitted with entire faith, absolute patience, to the experiments of the husband who imposed upon her the tortures of this faith—keeping her for hours and hours in the dark laboratory beneath the projection of the intense electric light, the ray of infinite power which, according to Klipper's calculations—would cause the development, the opening of that third eye with which the scientist wished to endow humanity.

In this old apartment in the Place de Valois a constant, a poignant drama was being performed, of which Paris was ignorant, whose secret escaped even reporters as keen as Frédéric Clément: there was a man of genius bent upon the solution of an insane

problem, and an obedient young wife, sacrificing herself to the physician's experiments, holding her forehead to the burning ray as an Iphigenia would have bowed her head to the knife.

Self-sacrificing. No. To Marthe Klipper there was no sacrifice in these long hours spent beneath the jet of the electric light, those slow halting places before the machine whence the ray issued sharp and burning—no sacrifice, but a joy, a wild joy, the delight of collaborating—even though as a victim—in a sublime work, the joy of giving her body as material for study to the man, the great man whose name she bore.

And the blind woman remained without stirring under the implacable ray, her brow bent by the moxa, marked beneath her beautiful fair hair by the stigmata of science, burned—but intoxicated with happiness, with a sort of hysteria of sacrifice at the idea that, if Klipper at last found the solution he sought, it would be in and through her.

Oh! it was not her egotism that gave her this fond intoxication.

Recovering her sight was a matter almost indifferent to her. She did not think of herself. She was thinking only of others, or rather only of him.

If he should make this incredible discovery! If man, condemned to his present form for thousands

of years, should suddenly recover, thanks to Klipper, a portion of his lost heritage!

To endow mankind with a means of new vision! To restore to those who can no longer see the means of sight! To resuscitate the fabled Cyclops, and make modern men of them! Jean Klipper seemed to Marthe a diviner of unknown springs, a seeker of buried treasures, who gave back to the race the riches of which it had been robbed.

She felt a pride in being thus—whether the experiment succeeded or not—the hostage of this scientist in his war against the impossible.

Besides, why should not the experiment succeed? The young wife shared Klipper's confidence and lived upon his dream, like those beings who, one influencing the other, share the same chimera while living a double madness.

Marthe sometimes believed she already felt the sensation of an opening, and her imagination showed her her forehead yawning, bursting under the ray of light, like a ripe pomegranate.

Yet, if the miracle was realized, what joy it would be! And realized it would be, since Jean Klipper had predicted it. Marthe, like a devotee smiling in her faith, would have considered the least doubt of the scientist's omnipotence a sacrilege.

When, suggested by Klipper's own words, she told

him that she felt vague hopes, as if the bones in her face had undergone some change, proved by the cracking she thought she noticed, the scientist answered gently:

"When you are able to see me, if I succeed in restoring your sight, who knows whether you will still love me, when your eyes show me as an old man! My hair is white, Marthe! I have wrinkles, you do not know that!"

Then she took his hands, pressed them in her own, leaned her fair, childish head on the investigator's shoulder and, in a very tender voice, replied: "It is work that has whitened your hair, the search for so many truths that has given wrinkles. You are not the old man you say, and I love you, and shall always love you with the same ardently grateful, devoted passion, ah! Jean, devoted enough to die for you, if it were necessary, if you wished it."

He patted her hands:

"No, happily, no; the point in question is not to die, but to live."

And he grew excited over his possible discovery, dreaming this dream to improve Nature, to add to man an instrument of new life, to develop this embryo of forgotten eyes in the bodies of human beings.

"Yes, I know I would not be believed if I should tell them what I was seeking; they would talk of

Sainte-Anne and those who have chairs in the Institute would vote me a padded cell! I know, I know. But you, you believe in me, you believe, you divine!—And I love you for your goodness, as I love you for your confidence!—I torture you, you know how to suffer under the ray that eats into your flesh!"

"I? No! I do not suffer!"

Marthe's voice had rapturous caresses when she answered in this way, and a flame seemed kindling in the depths of her sightless eyes, as the lifted lashes accompanied the delicious smile of her lips.

"I weary you by leaving you hours and hours before that electrical machine."

"I am never weary, when I hear you speak, or when you are walking near me."

"And what are you thinking during these hours of trial, my poor Marthe?"

"I am thinking that you are the best of human beings, and the most learned man in this country!"

"Don't say that, don't say that, Marthe! Do you know what others are seeking, what others have perhaps found? There are so many efforts of the brain nowadays; this little ant who is called man is multiplying so many attempts to transport bits of straw! Perhaps, in some unknown laboratory, some attic or cellar, there is an unknown scientist

who at this moment is discovering an engine, motor, or light that will unsettle the world. There is perhaps another who is finding a powder capable of blowing up the entire universe! Who would suspect that, in our cellar in the Rue de Valois, I am pursuing this dream of restoring sight to the blind by giving mankind a new eye?''

Then, forgetting that he had said and repeated to the young wife twenty, a hundred times, what he always reiterated with fresh excitement, he persisted, his voice sometimes becoming panting, emphasizing the words with his Alsatian accent, returning to his eternal besetting subject with the fervor of an apostle:

''Everything in Nature has a purpose, everything. This forgotten eye, more or less distinct in all vertebrates; this eye, which is neither glands, nervous ganglions nor lymphatic ganglions made of a few nervous fibers and calcareous secretions, must have a purpose; there must be some object for this degenerate organ, which I wish to regenerate. Reduced to nothing in some, more developed in others, no longer receiving, says Luydig, luminous rays, but only calorific ones, it is in us a sort of eye thermometer. In any case, atrophied or rudimentary, it exists! And I desire not only that it shall exist, but that it shall be of

some service; that this eye which no longer receives light should again perceive and give it. After all, Marthe, our ancestors knew this pineal gland considered as a third eye! The anatomists of Galien's time regarded it as a plug, a simple cork intended to open and close the aqueduct of Silvius. If the organ turned backward, it might really obstruct the passage. At least they held this opinion, which Galien himself did not. So he treated them as ignorant men, ignoramuses."

"And Descartes!"

Jean Klipper opened a large book and read to Marthe, who always listened with enraptured patience, the eternal lesson of the master.

"He has not said that this eye, this third eye, was the seat of the soul. No. This is what I find in his treatise. Listen."

"I am listening."

"It is the source of *spirits.* Animal spirits in the time of Descartes. What we now call the nervous influx. Spirits flow from the pineal gland into the concavities of the brain. 'It must be imagined as an abundant spring—a very little thing is required to incline it more or less, sometimes to one side, sometimes to the other—and while thus inclining, it leads the spirits that issue from it to take their course toward certain places in the brain rather than toward

others.' And quite naturally Descartes's opinion has been distorted by his commentators, Regius and Louis de la Forge, scouted by Voltaire as a man of brains.

"Men of brains, you see, Marthe, men of brains are the great flatterers of fools and artisans of folly! The soul should be seated there like a coachman on his box, from which it would direct the impulsions of the brain by the aid of the reins! But this was not what was said by the admirable Descartes who, finding life too short for what he desired to do—you will find this in the 'Life of Saint-Evremond,' by Des Moizeaux —wanted to prolong it for hundreds of years, yes, hundreds, and who would have found the secret, if— if he had not died at fifty-two. Ah! the grain of sand! the grain of sand! The unexpected! I fear only the grain of sand, you see, Marthe! The accident that lies in wait for us in the darkness! The tortoise that falls upon our skulls while we are resting like the sleeping poet! I fear only that—that and the men of brain, the chaffers, the skeptics—this is what the great Descartes intended to say, and what he does say in many passages: all our organs are double, the impressions that come from them to the brain are double, and yet we have only a single and simple thought of one thing at one time. Therefore there must be some place where the two images that arrive through the two eyes—or, if you choose, the

two other impressions that come from a single object by the double organs of the other senses, you understand—where these two images may meet in one, in order that they may reach the soul, in order that they may not represent to it two objects instead of one—'There is no other place in the body where they could be so united as they are in this gland.' On the whole, according to Descartes, this odd cerebral organ is absolutely adapted for uniting and fusing the double impressions—and also in directing them by the nerve tubes as nervous influx—animal spirits—toward such or such a point of the brain where the conscious impression will be made. I tell you this to show you the importance attached by this very great man to this rudimentary organ. Willis and Stenow—in spite of the evidence—made merry at the expense of Descartes. One could not help laughing. The seat of the soul! The seat of the soul! They called attention to the fact that the gland was small in the man who has a great soul, and—oh! oh! sometimes, not always—and large in the ox that has a small one. Besides, the Cartesians denied animals a soul, in which they, too, were imbeciles! But how Galien or Descartes may have erred, matters little to me. They verified, that is the important point. And I, too, I will prove that the gland is there, the eye is there—''

He touched his wife's forehead with his finger.

"Our very remote ancestors had this eye which has, as it were, closed in the course of time! It is the atavic eye of the mollusk bequeathed by the invertebrates to the vertebrates, and which man has allowed to be atrophied. I have studied, dissected saurians, lizards. Well, the ball of that eye really does issue through a hole in the skull. And it is a genuine eye. There is a retina, a crystalline, a mass of vitreous humor; the epidermis forms the cornea. It is the eye of the cephalopod, it is the eye of the frog, and it is the human eye. The hole in the skull through which the pineal nerve issued is found saved in an interparietal bone which I have encountered in fossil saurians, and nothing, nothing prevents my believing that this atrophied eye might be developed and resume its place in life where it was formerly, where it must be, where it will be to-morrow."

"To-morrow!"

Jean Klipper seemed to see before him a new mankind, provided with that frontal lantern to guide itself into the darkness of the unknown. Who could know what the triple vision might add to the knowledge of man!

"Oh! I know, the æsthetes will say that it is not beautiful! The eye of the Cyclops! They will protest in the name of beauty! Beauty! What is

beauty? And utility? Is that nothing? Is it not life itself?''

Besides, he cared little what others might think. His object was first the welfare of the worshiped woman whom he was subjecting to his experiments; it was sight restored to the blind, the living eye substituted for the two dead ones. This martyr drawn from the torture of darkness and restored to light by this scientific miracle.

''Miracle? Mirage, perhaps,'' he said to himself, in his hours of despondency. ''I am sure of being right, but shall I be able to reach this truth?''

Days passed, long days when, under the scorching rays, before the machine casting its light full on her forehead, Marthe remained almost motionless, dreaming—feeling like a gimlet the fire entering there in the skull, hoping and repeating:

''Let us go on! You will find it! You will restore my sight!''

''And if I impair your health in the attempt?''

''I never feel as well as after I have been under the flame.''

''If I should not succeed?''

''You *will* succeed. It seems as if it were your lips which rest upon my brow, and that this light which bestows its kiss, is you.''

Thus they intoxicated each other with chimeras,

encouraging each other in their dreams, moving in the same vision in a community of effort, patience, and love.

"You are right," repeated Klipper; "it is necessary to believe. And I do believe. If I had only the illusion, the mere illusion of giving you sight, if death should take me this evening, suddenly, I should die happy! Ah! perhaps the real light, the star of our night is but an illusion!"

He recurred a little, according to his custom, to this persistently-pursued problem when he had left André and joined Marthe in the apartment.

He sat down in an armchair, looking through the panes of the lofty windows at the gray walls, the gray sky, the other side of the courtyard, the Palais. He loved this peaceful corner of the city, fancied himself at Versailles, or farther away in these winter days in some part of the North. There were such views of old palaces of the time of Louis XIV in Strassburg, at Saverne, but those were red—or gray in the Vosges. And he dreamed, while Marthe gave old Anna the orders for the evening meal.

"It is strange," he said, after a long, thoughtful silence, "the artist's psychosis—this very peculiar case interests me. The man is handsome, talented, and he suffers. I should like to cure him of his trouble. There is no other way than the one Char-

din indicated: to give him the persuasion that he is cured—prove to him that he is cured. How? In the Middle Ages, my dear Marthe, the unfortunate man would have been regarded as possessed. They would have seen in this psycho-neurosis the clutch of the Evil One, the *signum diaboli.* And it is a sort of Sosia."

And giving Molière a slight Alsatian accent, the scientist scanned like music the lines of "Amphytrion":

"A man of honor am I, my word I pledge,
And I beg you, sir, to believe me.
I tell you,—supposing there was but one Sosia,
I found two of us in our house,
And of these two selves, both jealous of each other,
One is now indoors and the other with us."

"The two selves! Sosia! This devil of a Molière, who scorned physicians, had divined what medicine ought to study: the dividing of the personality. That doesn't surprise you, Marthe? Only, he attributed to the intervention of the gods, to the Lord Jupiter, what we attribute to neurosis—but it's curious, this double self of the good Sosia!"

And returning to his:

"Yes, I should like to cure that man!" he shook his head, seeking some ingenious method.

"How? Ah! how! Neither bromide of potassium

nor sodium will conquer this abnormal mentality! I don't know what treatment a physician would order, seclusion, silence, injections of salted water into an artery. That isn't it! That isn't it!

"There is a certain Dr. Dubois at Berne, who has seen clearly into such cases, *For psychic ailment, psychic treatment,* he has said, even written. It is through reasoning, conversation, persuasion, that he reaches the real self of the patient.

"By Jove, if this Monsieur Fortis were forbidden wine and cigars, and condemned to the cell, the phantom would not be driven away. It would require—it would require—"

VII

MALEBRANCHE'S LEG OF MUTTON

"Do you know the story of Malebranche's leg of mutton, Marthe? The Cartesian was a little crazy, but this other Christian Plato had genius. When he read Descartes for the first time, he had palpitation of the heart, and almost died of joy. *Yes! yes! yes!* Perhaps that is the way to admire. Such disciples become masters—and Malebranche had his manias. He never drank anything but water, declaring that *hydraulic* treatment is necessary for our organism, and it alone is normal. But the eccentric fellow also had hallucinations. It seems—I don't warrant the fact, but it is probable—it seems that he imagined he had at the end of his nose, yes, hung to his nose, a leg of mutton—"

"A leg of mutton?"

"A leg of mutton."

"As the heroes of Perrault's tale had a black-pudding in the same place?" said Marthe, laughing.

"Exactly. The poor man thought he saw there, before his eyes, this leg of mutton which hung down

heavily, interposed between his paper and himself, so that he could neither read nor write. The leg of mutton, the imaginary leg of mutton, cut his sentence in two, hid the one he had commenced. You can understand the torture, the suffering of this perpetual hallucination. 'But you have nothing at the end of your nose,' the poor deformed genius was told. Now the official scientists would say, 'You have nothing there! No leg of mutton! Not a sign of a leg of mutton!' 'But I see it; I see it; it is there, there!' And the crazy philosopher was dragging with him this phantom, this specter of a leg of mutton—when one day an Oratorian, who invented auto suggestion at that moment, without knowing it, had an excellent and very simple idea. But it is the simple things that are excellent. He said to Malebranche: 'I am going to cure you!' 'How?' 'By removing your leg of mutton. Oh! it's a very simple operation and will cause you little pain. A small incision there, very, very slight, at the tip of the nose!' 'Operate, go to work, cut,' said Malebranche, 'but rid me of this leg of mutton!' 'I'll choose my time, don't worry,' said the Oratorian. And one day, while worthy Nicolas Malebranche was sleeping near the fire, the Oratorian who, by the way, my dear Marthe, had also foretold anæsthesia, and operations performed during slumber, the Oratorian, who had pre-

pared the stage effect and brought a leg of mutton concealed under his coat, made a little cut with a knife on the end of the monomaniac's nose. Malebranche woke with a start, and cried out: 'Who is there?' The Oratorian answered: 'I, who have just performed a little surgical operation and rid you of your leg of mutton.' 'My leg of mutton?' 'Here it is!' And the Oratorian waved, as a hunter would a hare, the little leg of mutton he had prepared. 'My leg of mutton!' said Malebranche. 'Yes, and I took advantage of your sleep to hurt you as little as possible, and you were so near the fire that your leg of mutton was a little cooked. We shall be able to eat it!' 'With pleasure,' said Malebranche. He uttered a sigh of relief and returned to his papers without ever being heard to speak of the leg of mutton again. The hallucination was dispelled. It had been proved to Malebranche that the phantom was no longer there! The leg might not have been good, but he must have found it delicious. To devour the specter that haunts you is the Carib eating his enemy. Well, what I should like—how am I to succeed in it? —what I should like to do is to repeat upon André Fortis the experiment of Malebranche's leg of mutton! To give him the proof that the phantom is no longer there, that the false Sosia, who persecutes and cudgels, is driven away and cudgeled in his turn.

Here is another little problem of psychopathy to add to all those I wish to resolve. Oh! it is less difficult than the one which is to me the most important of all! I shall find it! I shall find it!"

"You will find everything you desire," replied the caressing voice of the woman-child, whose whole being turned toward the scientist like the believer toward God.

While Klipper was speaking, Marthe had softly knelt on a stool near him, lifting her face, whose sightless eyes seemed to read, divine all the tenderness which Jean Klipper's large ardent ones lavished upon this beloved unfortunate creature. He said softly, as if thanking her for so much faith, goodness, and devotion:

"Dear little great soul!"

And in the twilight stealing through the lofty window, among the books in plain bindings which the dusk was gradually concealing, this woman kneeling beside this man with long white hair, gaunt, thoughtful, muffled in his black overcoat, would have given the idea of some penitent prostrated before the sign of the priest.

But the almost paternal gesture of the scientist's hand caressing Marthe's drooping brow brought to mind all the human tenderness of the being devoted to another human being, and Jean Klipper, looking at

the houses on the opposite side of the great courtyard, which were gradually vanishing in the gray twilight, said gently:

"People have often tried to define happiness. Happiness is labor near a beloved woman who understands you—quiet, continuous labor, with one sole object in view. And what an object! To restore the worshipped woman to the light."

"Don't be selfish, Jean," she replied. "There is also—Malebranche!"

Marthe was smiling.

"Oh! he, André Fortis, I will restore him, also, to himself! I am seeking, pursuing, two lights at once: one for your eyes, and one for his brain. And the hardest to make shine is the one there, under this forehead!"

He bent toward her, gave her a kiss on the exact spot where the jet of electricity, swift as a short-circuit, had set its mark and, shaking his head, added:

"Up to the present time you are stigmatized by science—that is all—my poor darling!"

"And those who are stigmatized work miracles, it is said. But the miracle-worker will be you—you, my love, my master, my God!"

VIII

THE OTHER'S MASTERPIECE

THROUGH the window of the house in the Rue Murillo, André Fortis's wife was gazing at the dreary scene of a winter day shrouding the Park Monceau. The weather was snowy, the trees powdered with flakes beneath a gray sky. The marble statues were edged with a cold white wadding. The roofs of the boulevard in the distance were covered with hoar frost—an atmosphere of desolation and death.

How many times had Cécile watched these same houses, these same trees, that half-seen monument of Gounod, yonder among the cold plants, hidden under their covering of straw! It was her only view, the corner of the universe where she fixed her thoughts and which, from the heart of this luxurious house—so empty to her—seemed like an opening from prison.

André was working up above in his studio, finishing a canvas into which he was putting, he told her, all his ardor.

André! Which André? The fascinating man whom she had met at Trouville, the lover who had

borne her away one evening in her bridal robes, whiter than the snow through which pierced the tops of the grass blades on the lawns, or *The Other,* the wild-eyed stranger who appeared at certain hours and seemed to set upon a beloved face the mask of a madman?

What work was occupying the artist who, by turns, produced dreamy woodland scenes, Venetian canals full of light, and at the same time strange hecatombs, savage mythological visions, compositions of gloomy, terrible, incomprehensible mysticism?

Which André was she going to see presently come down to take his seat opposite to her at luncheon—or to fly, to disappear and return to the apartment without any distinct memory, a stranger to their common life, gazing at her with wondering eyes?

She thought of Dr. Klipper, who had come to see her, and whom Fortis had consulted in his turn. The physician had given no sign of life since his visit, and she dared not ask André what he had prescribed. Besides, nothing in the artist's acts or words, for some time, could make her dread another attack. He was seized with a sort of frenzy for work, was finishing, he said, a large landscape for the Salon. Not in the hope of a great medal, or any decoration whatever, he cared little for them. He was working for himself, it was his joy.

And, by an affectation wholly new in him, who willingly showed his wife his draughts and sketches, consulted her about the effect sought, he insisted on keeping secret this canvas which he considered a decisive work.

"When it is finished," he answered Cécile, "it will be my masterpiece; let me seek until the last moment to make it one!"

It was on this "masterpiece," dreamed of by all artists, who so often fall exhausted from the height of their vision, that André was working in his studio, while Cécile was gazing at the mournful gray hue of this January sky, the white leprosy of yonder roofs, the snow clinging to the angles of the neighboring balconies, the edges of the windows. She let her thoughts wander, wander very far away, lose themselves in this dreariness of hopeless skies.

The noise of the door opened behind her made her turn her head.

It was Aurèle, André's valet. He held out on a tray a card to Cécile.

"Madame, a gentleman, who said he did not wish to speak to my master, but to you."

Cécile took the card: "*Petrus Hardy.*" She knew the artist well. She admired his portraits, and was aware that he was fond of André. Yet it was to her that he wished to speak. What could it be? Her

instinct did not deceive her. There was some menace in the air, and it concerned André.

"Show Monsieur Hardy into the drawing-room."

Cécile instinctively cast one last glance at the park buried under the snow and, hearing the door of the drawing-room open to admit Petrus Hardy, she entered, bowed to the painter, who seemed slightly embarrassed, and motioned to him to sit down.

He thanked her and, looking round him as if he feared a sudden visitor, said:

"Monsieur Fortis is not in, Madame?"

"He is in his studio."

"Safely? He cannot hear us?"

"No, sir," replied Cécile, alarmed. "But of course he may come down—"

"I am going to tell you very quickly the matter in question. You will pardon me, I hope. My proceeding is singular, even painful—to me—to you. But the affair concerns a great artist, his renown, his name. You will forgive me—"

"Yes, yes, certainly," answered Cécile, becoming nervous. "But what is it, sir? What is it?"

"Madame, as you doubtless know, we are preparing the exhibition of the Salon du Cercle. Our varnishing day will be especially crowded this year. We have works from some masters who send nothing to the Champs Elysées, and we had requested André

Fortis to let us have a set of his last studies in Venice —his masterpieces. To see once more, on his canvases, the fallen Campanile, was a joy and a consolation.''

''Well?'' said Cécile.

''Well, Madame, what your husband sends us is not a series of impressions of Venice; it is a painting which has greatly amazed us all.''

In a rapid vision, the remembrance of the strange canvas seen one day on the easel in André's studio returned to Cécile's mind—the terrible apparition of the ''Golden Calf'' rolling his chariot over the crushed bodies.

''What is the picture?'' she asked.

''Good Heavens, Madame, if it were any other artist than Fortis, the canvas might pass for a wager, one of those pistol shots fired in the Salon to collect a crowd; for Fortis, it would be thought an attempt to create an uproar, a scandal.''

''But what else?''

''Imagine, Madame, an automobile launched in the midst of darkness upon a crowd. Two huge gleaming eyes, a tremendous machine and, under the rubber-tired wheels, a regular human pulp. Women and children crushed. Blood, brains! The most horrible of spectacles. And beneath this picture, in red letters on the frame, these words: 'Modern High Life.' There is talent in it, of course, much talent—but,

what shall I say? A talent that seems the result of a hallucination. Turner had these visions at the end of his life, and you know that, at that time, Turner—I beg your pardon—''

Petrus Hardy stopped, looking at Madame Fortis, whose face expressed acute suffering. Then, his gloved fingers mechanically polishing the hat he was holding on his knees:

''We are greatly embarrassed, you understand. The committee will refuse to exhibit a canvas which seems like an intentional protest against many of our fellow members of the club, members of the Automobile Club—'Modern High Life,' the title shows it—and which, besides, as a piece of work is gaudy, sensational, sinister, with its wounds, its broken limbs, its pools of blood. Before sending to Monsieur Fortis a refusal that will annoy him, I thought, Madame, of speaking semi-officially to her who is specially interested in the success, the glory of a master whom we all love.

''What would be disagreeable, stated by a committee, will become very simple if the decision, translated by you, becomes a cordial warning, one of those counsels which women, better than anyone else, understand how to give us when we are uneasy, when we doubt ourselves, which happens to all of us.''

Cécile was convinced that Petrus Hardy and the

committee were right. She remembered too well the painful impression she had experienced when standing before that other canvas which had since disappeared from the studio. But she could not give André the advice of which Petrus Hardy spoke, since she did not know the picture.

"I could tell him only what you yourself tell me."

"What, Madame, has not Monsieur Fortis showed you—"

"My husband doubtless feared that my impression would exceed yours and then, you know, he does not take my advice about all his pictures," she said very quickly, to explain her ignorance of such a work, to prevent this visitor from suspecting that two distinct beings were as if incarnated in the same body, two different painters of almost hostile tendencies encased in the same exterior.

"You could see the picture at the club. Will you do us the honor of coming this very day?"

"Yes, I will go there. But I trust to you. I know that my husband is beset by certain cares of a social character—I thank you for having given me your opinion, your advice as a friend—"

"And admirer. But not a word of my step to Monsieur Fortis, I beg you. He might attribute it to some attack of jealousy on my part, and I am jealous only of his fame!"

Cécile had but one thought—to go to the club and judge the truth of Petrus Hardy's anxiety. The picture, whose dimensions were unusual for a club exhibition, was faced to the wall, among other canvases not yet hung. Petrus, who was waiting for Madame Fortis, gave the order to turn it and Cécile, at the horror of the sight, uttered a cry.

It was the sinister vision of the "Golden Calf," but even more exaggerated and aggravated, one of those apparitions a la Chifflart—still more apocalyptic —in which an appetite for horror, an accumulation of dismal details gave the impression of a hallucination of murder. The giant automobile, a sort of fiery dragon, red, red with blood, darting with huge, round eyes upon the piled-up corpses, and the capital letters "Modern High Life" traced in vermilion on the frame, added a savage irony to this vision of horror.

"You know," said Petrus to Madame Fortis, who stood motionless, hypnotized with terror before her husband's canvas, "what Dick, the caricaturist, has christened the picture—which he unfortunately saw? 'The Apotheosis of Squashing!' "

Cécile, distracted, answered:

"You are right. This picture must not come before the eyes of the public. Keep it, hide it. I don't know how I shall induce my husband to destroy it!

But it is a dream of a sick man. I don't wish, I cannot see that! I cannot!''

She turned away from the horrible vision. She was in haste to leave this ground-floor room, where they had banished the immense frame. She would tell André all; and, leaving the club where this ''Modern High Life'' remained, she wondered, on her way back to the house in the Rue Murillo, whom she would find at home, the man whom she loved or the man she feared, the creator of so many landscapes saturated with the soul of things or the author of that repulsive vision which seemed like a phantasmagoria of Callot seen through a window of the Morgue? André, or he who took the name of André? *He* or *The Other?*

It was André who welcomed her at the threshold of the apartment, André smiling, loving, asking her:

''Where did you come from? Why did you go out? I have been taking a walk in the park. I had worked too much—my head ached—''

At first Cécile tried to evade. She had been to see her parents.

''Ah! How is your father?''

''Well.''

''And your mother?''

''She is well, too.''

''We don't see them often.''

"That is the way of life. The young go with the young. And then my father is always afraid of disturbing you. A soldier, he respects orders: you shut yourself up—"

She was talking for the sake of talking, giving or seeking a reason for going out, but she did not know how to lie. She saw that the man who was listening, questioning her, was really her conscious husband, the great artist whose name she bore.

Cécile was unwilling to wait; even though he should suffer, she would tell him all. And she ventured to do so. Yes, down at the club, there was a picture signed André Fortis which, if exhibited, would cause a scandal.

"A picture of mine? I have sent nothing! Nothing! What is it?"

At the first words of description Cécile uttered, a cry of despairing anguish escaped the artist's lips.

"The automobile! The iron monster! I know! I have seen it!"

And in fact, he was again seeing the bloody canvas, the scarlet canvas which he had hesitated to destroy, the horror realized by *The Other's* brush.

"Oh! it is enough to drive one mad!" he said wrathfully.

Everywhere, always, inevitably, like a shadow detaching itself from him, he found this stranger, this

being, sharing his life, or rather imposing his own life upon him—forcing him to countersign acts of which he was ignorant, works which he detested—this "double" bearing the same name, living within him —this detestable and detested *Other,* whose prisoner he was, and whose accomplice he was now becoming.

"Responsible for his insults, responsible for his works—and to say to myself that this being made of flesh and blood—yes, my poor Cécile, made of my flesh and blood, is not impalpable, but indiscernible, that he exists, since he acts, produces, since he is myself, and if to rid myself of him, I should put a bullet in his head, I should kill myself. No, it is absurd, it is maddening, it is incredible. And it is true! This arm is his, this hand, my own, is his! This brain I share with him! Yes, beneath this skull I have, as it were, a half brain, whose other half is another's! Oh! there is enough of this, you see! Really, too much! And once more I ask your forgiveness for having associated your life with that of this half madman. Forgive, forgive! Forgive!"

Cécile had often heard this word, this cry of desperation. And she forgave without effort, since she loved, her very love for the unfortunate man increasing in her pity.

She soothed him. She proved to him that this fresh manifestation of the dividing of his life would injure

neither his reputation nor even his health. How had this picture been sent to the club? André doubtless had had it sent while in the "second state." He remembered but vaguely the *aura* of a last attack, which undoubtedly had lasted only a short time. Flashes of light, a constriction around the skull, and he had certainly lost the consciousness of his *Ego*. For how much time? He did not know. Long enough, at least, to have summoned some porters and sent the picture to the President of the Art Committee of the club. Aurèle, the valet, remembered perfectly having seen some men carrying away in a van a large frame which his master was watching. He even seemed very anxious and repeated to the men:

"Take care of the frame! The frame is as important as the picture, on account of the inscription."

André had no recollection of all this. Instead of those pools of blood painted upon an apocalyptic canvas, he might, with fingers that had become a murderer's, have shed human blood, for which he would have been no more responsible.

"I cannot, I cannot live in this way any longer! Let Dr. Klipper condemn me to exile, to confinement, to solitude, to silence, to everything which relieves or cures lunatics, I submit in advance to his orders—

but there is too much of visions and horrors, too much. This is no longer living, I would rather die!''

Cécile answered gently:

''We will see Dr. Jean Klipper.''

IX

TO KILL *THE OTHER*

"You would rather die? I understand that if you were compelled to submit to the law of others! It's unbearable—*imbossible—imbossible—*"

It was Dr. Klipper who, in his office in the Rue de Valois, was coldly, imperturbably answering Fortis, who was relating his last ordeal and repeating what he had said to Cécile. Madame Fortis had accompanied her husband to the doctor's, and was seated near the window, looking at the little blind woman with the loving smile, who was standing near the scientist's armchair, her elbow resting on the back, suggesting the idea of some guardian angel.

"You can no longer live in the company of *The Other,* exposed to the tyranny of *The Other?* That is perfectly natural—very natural. Well, here it is," said the little thin man, darting his fiery gaze at André, "there must be an end to *The Other*—it is necessary to kill him!"

"To kill him?"

"That's all."

"I don't understand," said Fortis.

"Yet it is clear. You are, you yourself recognize it, haunted by a singular being who, like an unexpected guest, takes possession of your identity when you least suspect it? Well! Expel him! And as the most thorough form of expulsion is death, kill him!"

"I have often thought of dying," replied Fortis with an expression of suffering that made Cécile shiver.

The little man moved restlessly in his armchair and shook his long white hair.

"I'm not talking about you," he said bluntly; "I'm talking about the man you call *The Other* and who has a name—"

"A name?"

"Certainly. Imbue yourself thoroughly with the idea that this being, this 'subliminal,' has a distinct existence in you, living in your brain as a worm would live in your bowels, and it is through you that he must be attacked. He must be killed to permit you to live. Come," said Klipper, "until now you have felt, endured him without giving him a name. He is, pardon the word, a moral bothriocephalic. He has been to you a sort of specter, a mirage, an invisible wayfarer—*The Other!* Let us incarnate this *Other* in a being who will henceforth appear to you

under the features of a man who will perhaps resemble you, but who will no longer be you! Look at me steadily—''

And Klipper thrust, like two streams of the electric light domesticated by him in his cellar, the fire of his eyes upon André's; he dictated to him his will, hypnotized him by those flames, compelled him to believe in this apparently absurd, in reality consoling suggestion, so fully did he saturate with his orders this troubled brain.

''Yes, look at me. The being who hitherto has shared your existence and, as it were, poisoned it, is not called André Fortis; his name is André David.''

''André David!'' stammered Fortis.

Imperatively, like the very embodiment of will, the strange little man said questioningly:

''David, listen to me carefully, David, and answer me. Da-vid (he emphasized each syllable), André, is this really one of your Christian names?''

''Yes,'' replied André, ''André-Pierre-David.''

''Well, he has taken one of your Christian names, as he has taken your last name, and this André David, the day he disappeared, would restore full liberty to André-David Fortis, the real Fortis, who is yourself. Do you understand fully?''

''Yes,'' André repeated.

The Alsatian had taken the artist's feverish hands in his own thin ones, and was almost crushing the fingers by the pressure.

With a tremendous tension of the brain, he was forcing into the young man's mind this almost insane idea—and, trembling from head to foot, Cécile watched these two, so unlike, seated opposite to each other, and who seemed, face to face, less a physician and a patient than two adversaries measuring each other for a duel. What eyes, what a will—the absolute will of Klipper dictating to Fortis this startling idea that an André David lived with him, and the far weaker will of Fortis, conquered, besides, by the scientist's gaze, bending, accepting this fantastic revelation, absurd if his reason could have spoken.

But there was no longer either free will or reason: Klipper was commanding, Klipper was hypnotizing, Klipper was evoking before André's imagination a real being who, suddenly, to the artist was also becoming as much alive as the passers-by whom he elbowed on the street. It was no longer *The Other*, it was now André David, André David, and the mere fact of giving a name to this hitherto invisible, intangible being, restored to André a portion of his freedom of mind.

It seemed as if this André David was now a sort of

adversary whom he could combat, a parasite whom he could drive away.

"The day when it will be proved to you that this André David is dead," asked Klipper, imposing by the magnetism of his eyes the answer and the belief in Fortis, "you will believe yourself free?"

"Yes, certainly, yes," said André, with a stifled voice.

"You will feel released from every fear?"

"Yes, Doctor, yes, but if he should live forever? If he keeps on living?"

"It is only Nature that lives forever, because she fattens upon ourselves. No person lives forever!"

Cécile felt a sudden terror at hearing these tragical words, coldly uttered, and Dr. Klipper, with the fair young woman at his side, now, by a singular transfiguration, produced the effect of some terrible wizard having evoked a "spirit" standing by him. And it seemed to her—though this André might be, in a manner, only a phantom—it seemed to her as if the scientist was speaking with a terrifying impassiveness of the suppression, the slaughter of a living being, of a real murder.

She did not understand, and yet she had, with a bewildered confidence, the vague instinct that André's recovery would result from this extraordinary conversation, and heard with joy Klipper—toward

whom Marthe was bending her face full of rapturous admiration—repeat:

"You will master this André David. Yes, yes, I promise you, on the word of Klipper. But first of all you are fully convinced that he exists? Are you not?"

"Yes," said André.

"Look at me again. Look at me. Better than that. You believe it? You believe me?"

"Yes," André repeated more firmly.

"Well! We will dismiss him once for all. And if you ever feel again—listen to me carefully, do not forget a word of what I am going to say to you—if you feel, by any warning whatever, that this man, the Intruder, the Guest, the Enemy, threatens to resume possession of your being, at the moment you feel the mere breath of his presence, or the scratch of his claw —take the first bit of paper at hand, and with pen or pencil, trace the simple words: *'He is there!'* then send me the information by Madame Fortis."

He had turned toward Cécile who was listening, chilled, as if the words dictated had marked some terrible sentence.

"You will forget nothing?—*He is there!*—and watch! This is my only prescription! Now, go and come as you please, burn or don't burn the works that André David wishes to exhibit under your name;

that matters little. The important thing is to know whether he will return or not. You are to be on the watch. You alone can warn me of his possible presence. When you have told me: *He is there,* I will act."

"But, Doctor—"

One last time Jean Klipper darted his gaze, burning as a ray of light into André's eyes; one last time his curt, energetic voice repeated:

"You have comprehended enough? You will obey!"

André, conquered, dominated, hypnotized, went out of the apartment as if molded by the master's will, and Cécile, entering the coupé waiting in the Rue Valois, was completely astonished to find again a little Parisian life—passers-by, fashionable women—after having spent an hour with a sort of magician, a wizard of another day.

She still saw, beneath the long white hair, the glowing eyes of this man fixed upon the dreamy, velvety, bewildered, obedient ones of André Fortis.

And the artist had no sooner left Klipper's drawing-room than the old doctor, rubbing his dry hands, said:

"My dear Marthe, there is a cure which will not lead me to the Institute, thank Heaven, but which will be curious! Very curious. Extraordinary.

That man is now convinced of the reality of this André David. He is going to see him in flesh and blood. He is under suggestion, he will believe in this phantom's tangible life. He might now be told that the specter has no normal existence, he would answer that people were deceiving themselves or deceiving him! Well! if I can prove to him that this André David is dead—''

The Alsatian stopped, suddenly breaking into his short laugh.

''Well! Well! But really, my little Marthe, to kill a man, even when that man does not exist, is perhaps a case of conscience! Has one the right to destroy even a phantom?''

He was amusing himself in putting the question.

''Pshaw! room for the living—and so much the worse for the victims.''

Then, passing his fingers over the young woman's stigmatized brow:

''But this is something about which I am far more concerned than the second existence of André Fortis! Your life, my poor beloved Marthe! Your life! Your health! Your light!''

Then, with the somewhat fevered haste of the miner rushing to the placer, or the artist who is summoned by his unfinished work:

''Let us go to the laboratory,'' he said. ''It seems

as if the bones were separating under my hand, and we were approaching the goal!''

''Yes, perhaps so,'' answered the docile voice of the resigned wife, as usual.

They quietly descended the broad stone staircase, then the narrow winding one to the cellar and, seated in her customary place, motionless, Marthe Klipper submitted her forehead to the light streaming from the machine, which struck it exactly in the center like the blow of a stiletto.

The scientist's struggle against the impossible continued in the subterranean laboratory where the physician, full of hope, moved to and fro like a Magian, and where the patient remained motionless under the jet of the rays, like a martyr.

X

THE DEATH-STRUGGLE OF ANDRÉ DAVID

LIFE was resuming its course with André and Cécile, the usual life, the ordinary life, the happy life.

The artist had shut up in the darkness of the attic the sinister picture, compromising to his name, which, wrapped in serge, concealed, invisible, Petrus Hardy had had brought back by the employés of the club. And he had begun his work again as if no storm had passed over his existence.

To see him alert and smiling, to hear him talking about everything, like a well-informed and agreeable Parisian, no one, not even Cécile herself, would have suspected that this favored being, charming and almost merry, had endured such trials, bore within him a blemish. Man has such a faculty of forgetfulness during these brief halting places, to which he gives the name of happiness, that he loses the memory of what he has borne, experienced, suffered. The cloud passes. The weather is clear. It seems to him that it has always been fine.

It was fine weather in the apartment on the Rue

Murillo, fine in the hearts of these "married lovers," fine in the park sleeping beneath their eyes. Cécile, still a little anxious, sometimes went up softly toward the studio where André was shut in, listened for any sound that might cause her uneasiness. No, André was working quietly. Sometimes he was even singing, wholly escaped from his sufferings.

Then she knocked at the door:

"It is I."

"Come in."

She looked at the work commenced. Sunrises on the lagoon, twilights beneath the trees of Fontainebleau, visions of a poet and artist.

"Are you pleased with me? I think this has something good in it," he said, showing his canvases.

All the talent of André Fortis was shining in these masterly works.

It seemed as if he had become forever, himself, delivered from the terror of the past.

The mere fact that Dr. Klipper had personified, incarnated in a definite person the sort of phantom that had harassed André, gave the artist the sense of release.

It was no longer *The Other*—that is, another self—it was a living and acting individual, who was persecuting and substituting himself for him. No longer a sort of anonymous shadow, but an enemy, having in

a certain degree a civil status, a stranger whom Klipper had christened by his real name: *André David.*

And through a suggestion, each day more powerful, this André David had assumed form to André Fortis and was making the impression upon him, not of a troublesome guest, but of some living contemporary far away from him, with his own life, not mingling with his. A sort of bore, who had been driven away and retired nobody knew where.

The important point was that he should never reappear and, since the old Alsatian had, through his will, given or rather imposed this explanation accepted by André as final, the artist felt strangely relieved, certain that if this André David should again enter his existence, Jean Klipper would have weapons to drive him away.

What weapons? That was the doctor's secret. Fortis did not analyze, did not investigate. He believed. Besides, had he occasion even to think of Klipper's advice, since this *André David* had finally disappeared?

He had not disappeared. The preliminary dazzling light, the unexpected flash before the cerebral storm, passed before André's eyes one evening, during dinner, under the lamp, and Cécile saw her husband suddenly turn pale.

"What is the matter?"

"Nothing—or rather yes," said André, still conscious of his own personality; "yes, there is 'something the matter.' A warning—it is *He!*"

"*He?*"

She was terrified, André's eyes were looking at some object that she did not perceive.

"I see you as if you were enveloped with light; I can see only half your head, in a halo—it is *The Other*—the warning—he is coming. Do you remember what Klipper said?"

André's voice had already changed. It was dull, choked, as if some invisible hand had clutched the young man by the throat.

"Write to Klipper, write," he said in a quick tone.

Cécile, who had already risen from her chair, ran to her room, and returning very speedily, held out to André a pencil and pad. On the first loose sheet he scrawled, with a jerking movement, the summons dictated by Klipper:

"*He is there!*"

Then, with a short laugh, he added his signature, saying to the terrified Cécile:

"Let us use my name while I am still myself!"

Aurèle entered, bringing the coffee.

"Take it away," said Cécile; "your master is ill."

"Do you want anything, sir?"

Fortis was already fixing upon the servant eyes that evidently saw something else beyond him.

"No, thank you!"

Cécile wanted to be alone with André.

"Do you feel better?"

He stood before her, without answering.

She recognized, beheld again the expression of the face. It was the mask, the countenance of *The Other.*

"What?" he asked, as if he had not heard.

Oh! the terrible apparition of that frightful wedding night! André, poor André was again as she had seen him before her in that tragic hour, forbidding, startling. The *"passer-by"* was taking possession of him. He was going to become again—for how long—the nameless being whom the doctor had christened, personified in "André David."

She begged the unfortunate man to go to his room; she took his arm while he still retained a little conscious will, and went up the stairs with him until the moment when, on the steps, André abruptly broke away, exclaiming in a rude tone: "Let me go! I want to be alone!"

It was no longer André Fortis who uttered this *"let me go,"* but the robber of his personality. And this one, *The Other,* had rapidly gone up to his studio; he ran swiftly up the flight of stairs leading to it, and when Cécile, following rapidly, reached the door,

she found it closed and heard André with a violent movement push the bolt inside.

Then she felt that emotion of infinite terror inspired by a closed door behind which, in despair or anger, some loved one barricades himself. What is happening behind the wooden plank that separates us from the person whom we call? The impossibility of talking, explaining, entreating, goes to the brain, blows upon us like a blast of horror. A drama may be going on there, which must be endured in anguish and impotence.

Cécile beat with her clenched fists, repeating the beloved name: "André, André!"

How could André have answered? If he heard, he did not understand. That voice could rouse no emotion in him. Cécile was no longer his wife. He was abruptly living another life, and doubtless, seated before his easel, seized with that fever of savagely symbolical painting which caused him to produce the "Golden Calf" or "Modern High Life," was again dashing some fresh horror upon the canvas.

"André! André! It is I, André!"

And, as only the silence of the closed studio answered her cries of agony, she suddenly thought of Jean Klipper and the despairing summons that André had just signed with his name.

The old physician must be informed. She told

Aurèle to watch his master, follow him if he went out, and rushed to the apartment in the Place de Valois.

"I expected you," said Klipper. "An attack, sooner or later, was inevitable. I've made my plan of battle. Yes, yes, we will master the Evil One, as people used to say in old times!"

His plan was very simple. The point was to suppress this Double that haunted Fortis.

"An old story," said Klipper. "We believe we have invented something. The subliminal! The second state. The Egyptians knew that. It is old, old as the hills!"

He had at first believed that the mere suggestion would be sufficient to deliver André from his suffering. But the certainty of being subject to so much distress was so deeply fixed in the artist's brain that it was perhaps impossible to tear it out by the power of the will.

Klipper had found another method. He would suppress André Fortis's normal life to give him the sensation of being reborn into a new existence freed from all servitude of terror. He would force into the sick man's mind the conviction that he was released, forever released from his specter.

And Cécile might be happy. She would no longer know the horror of the unknown.

What he had imperatively dictated to Fortis recently, he repeated to Cécile with the calmness of certainty.

"We shall master this specter."

"Ah! Doctor, how I would bless you!"

"Oh! you would have no cause to bless me, Madame. What would be the use of science—which is so small a thing—if it were not to do a little good?"

But Klipper waited until the new attack which had just seized André had passed away, in order to act.

XI

EXPERIMENTS

The artist shut himself up in his studio, lived there in a desperate persistence in work to be accomplished, rang for Aurèle, took his meals there, did not go out, appeared to be a prey to a mania for toil that troubled Cécile.

She went almost constantly to Klipper, whom she found with Marthe, the ever loyal guardian angel whose soul divined and watched.

"I am alarmed," she said. "This fever for work frightens me. If he should be ill!"

An odd smile appeared on the little man's thin face.

"Who knows?" replied Klipper. "Perhaps that might be an excellent thing!"

He rubbed his bony fingers together and his glowing eyes seemed gazing into the distance at something invisible to Cécile—an unknown object, a vision.

"The sick," he said, "are cured. He might perhaps come out of typhoid fever delivered!"

This possibility of such a peril—a dangerous illness—thus assuming to the doctor a form of hope, so

bewildered Cécile that she wondered if Klipper was really in his right mind.

"Fear nothing, Madame. Your husband will find in his very over-excitement, the strength to resist such an ordeal, and while André David—since we have called him that—is working, André Fortis is resting. You will inform me when the latter regains his personality. Then I will interpose."

"And what will you do, Doctor?"

"The most trifling thing. You will see!"

"What I am seeking," he added, motioning toward Marthe, pale and thoughtful, with the red brand on her brow, "is difficult in a different way! And yet, I shall succeed, I shall succeed! We can do whatever we will. We do whatever we will. Unless accident, the unexpected—which destroys all our plans, overthrows our card-houses—should appear! I fear nothing in life except the unexpected, the atom, the dust, the grain of sand!"

Then, putting aside his personal anxiety and his dream, he went on:

"But, as for your husband, Madame, I am sure of succeeding! You know that his case is not unique? A famous engraver recently exhibited drawings, pastels, executed, he said, by a medium who directed his hand. All Paris was talking about it. People attributed to spiritualism what was an easily-explained

cerebral phenomenon. There is no spiritualism! There is the human brain which can imagine everything, and believe everything! Yes, yes, yes, I will aim at André Fortis's brain! You will take charge of his heart!''

André went down again one morning from his studio where—condemned to his second personality, he had lived and slept for days—taking up again his ordinary life at the exact point where he left it. It seemed as if nothing had interrupted his normal existence. At luncheon, the conversation with Cécile seemed the very continuation of the remarks interrupted by the attack. André asked about the health of General and Madame de Jandrieu—they were spending the winter at Pau—spoke of his landscapes for the next Salon, of Parisian news, of a piece played the evening before, an. account of which he had just read.

''We will go and see this play by Hervieu. I delight in his art.''

''Whenever you like,'' replied Cécile.

Nothing could have aroused a suspicion that there had been an interruption of nearly a week between the last meal taken together and this one.

Aurèle, unmoved, served the coffee now as he had served it the other day.

André perhaps did not even remember that he had

written to Klipper, dashed off like a cry of terror, scrawled the words: *"He is there!"*

He was there no longer, and the artist forgot the attack, enjoyed life without even wishing to think and, instinctively, his brain experienced the sensation of comfort that convalescence bestows.

"I should be perfectly happy," he said, "if it were spring. I long for woodland scenes painted from Nature in April."

He was looking through the window at the damp Park Monceau, under the gray February sky, with the melted snow, and the mournful white monument of Gounod.

"In April, we will go to Ville d'Avray, and I will evoke, if I can, *Papa* Corot by the shore of the pond."

Cécile now remembered Klipper's direction. When Fortis recovered his personality, the doctor must be informed, and the doctor would act. André was again in his normal condition. So the hour had come to try the experiment of which the Alsatian scientist had spoken without explaining, and which was to ensure the cure.

"He said so, Jean Klipper! He asserted it!"

She recalled his positive words: "I have formed my plan of battle." She had the most complete, absolute confidence in this singular man, who at one time had frightened her. "André cured, cured by

Klipper!" And then how many happy years lay before them!

She went directly to the Place de Valois, and told Klipper that the artist no longer even remembered having had a fresh attack; if the doctor wished, he could cure him now.

"Yes, yes," Klipper repeated.

He seemed constrained, a little annoyed. He was obliged to interrupt for a few days the experiments he was making upon Marthe. Interrupt them at the hour when, perhaps, under the rays of light, the expected opening, the enchantment, the miracle, was about to be produced.

Marthe really did feel in her forehead a sensation of cracking under the burn. One might have said that iron fingers were parting the bones in her skull. She, too, possessed the ardent faith that Jean Klipper had in the success of his work. With her dead eyes, which perceived no glimmer of light, she had the feeling, the illusion of catching a glimpse of an unexpected gleam. Was not the pain in her forehead—who could tell—a sort of birth from which would come forth, emerge, the hidden eye which the heat was opening?

She believed it. She said:

"I am hoping!"

And Klipper answered:

"I am sure of it!"

This certainty changed into pious attentions the torture he was inflicting on his young wife, suffering under the motionless waiting beneath the burning jet which was corroding, almost penetrating the skull.

But he was sure, yes, sure of success, sure of this triumphal discovery: man become a Cyclops, the power of sight of humanity increased one-third!

A shy recluse shunning patients, he felt a sort of anger at interrupting, even for a few hours, the pursuit of his dream to busy himself with a stranger, a case which seemed commonplace and of little importance compared with the astounding problem he desired to solve. But he had promised. He had said to Cécile: "Come." She came. He would obey the summons.

"Let us go and see your husband," he said.

XII

THE RECOVERY

Cécile's carriage was waiting in the Rue de Valois. It rapidly conveyed the doctor to the Rue Murillo, and André was a little surprised, though not annoyed, to see Jean Klipper arrive. He felt a respectful affection for this man, whom he found interesting from the intellectual standpoint, and artistically very handsome. Some day he would ask permission to paint his portrait. "I make figures, too," he said, smiling, no longer even remembering the wild symbolical paintings that had proceeded from his brush.

Klipper, on entering André's studio—it was there Cécile took the physician—went straight to his object, and taking from his long coat a shabby old pocket-book, drew from it a scrap of paper which he presented to Fortis as a creditor would unfold a bill payable to bearer.

"Do you recognize this?"

André took the paper. It was his own handwriting. Three words: *He is there!*

Cécile was alarmed at seeing him turn slightly pale.

"Yes," he said, "I called you!"

"Well?" asked Klipper.

André did not seem to understand what was wanted of him. He remembered having traced those words a few days before, as he would have uttered a cry of alarm. But everything which had followed disappeared to him in a dense fog. He recalled nothing. Even of the suspension of his normal life he retained no memory, no impression. It had been as if suppressed. He did not even realize that open parenthesis between the moment when he wrote to Klipper: "*He is there!*" and the one when Klipper appeared, paper in hand.

The physician questioned, tried to awake André's memory of one of his thoughts and, at least, acts during the *second state;* again André could recall nothing.

"Yet you have lived a new phase of that existence which overlies yours," said Jean Klipper. "And André David has resumed possession of this body which you share with him."

The old Alsatian gave his words a sort of sacerdotal solemnity, and André had the impression of being in the presence of some Magian speaking quite naturally

of the strangest phenomena, familiar, however, to him.

But, most of all, the artist felt rising within him a fierce wrath at the idea that *The Other,* the parasite, the adversary, the moral tapeworm, had made this offensive return, had again taken possession of his being—and without his even knowing it.

"This time," said Klipper slowly, "it must be ended."

"With joy, oh! with joy!" cried André.

Klipper's burning eyes, magnetically imperative—those eyes of the visionary which rested on Marthe's brow and studied the stars—those deep eyes were bent upon those of André Fortis, enveloping them with light.

"A surgeon might have an operation to perform upon you," he said, in the voice whose imperious tone was emphasized by the Alsatian accent. "You would allow yourself to be put to sleep? Yes, if it were appendicitis, which is the fashion, or some tumor—you would give your body up wholly to the surgeon?"

"Yes," said André, looking at Cécile who, standing before him, was trying to smile, or rather, was smiling, feeling ready to faint.

"Well," Klipper went on, "I am a surgeon of another sort. I wish to suppress, for a short time, this personality of yours, of which another robs you

for hours, that I may strengthen and consolidate it forever. I want to drive away this thief of your soul, this robber of your reason, the other André. André David!''

''*The Other!*'' Fortis once more repeated.

Then deliberately he added:

''What is to be done?''

''Submit to an operation like any other. You trust me!''

''Certainly I trust you, Doctor!''

''Body and soul?''

''Body and soul. Yes, do with me what you choose, provided that this specter no longer tortures me; everything that may seem to you necessary, even though it should be dangerous, everything.''

Cécile, motionless, maintained her tragical silence. It seemed to her that these two men were discussing a question of the life or death of one of them.

''Is it necessary for you to work just at present?'' asked Klipper.

''I wanted to commence my picture for the Salon, but it does not much matter—''

''You will go to it later with more pleasure. I ask, I require of you the abandonment of a few days of your life.''

Seeing André's eyes questioning him, he added more definitely:

"This attack, independent of your will—the interruption of your normal life—I will cause myself. And, when the attack has passed, there will no longer be an André David—*The Other* will be suppressed, driven away forever. Forever, I will take my oath."

"Agreed," said André Fortis.

Dr. Klipper motioned the artist toward a big leather-covered armchair with a high back, near the bay window of the studio.

"Sit down there!"

André obeyed.

The scientist laid his thin hand on Fortis's chest.

"No palpitations!"

He took the artist's left wrist, and put his thumb on it.

"The pulse is regular. You are a brave fellow!"

"Why shouldn't I be brave? You are there."

"No heart trouble. Very good," said the physician.

In the light from outside, this man with the long white hair standing near the large armchair in which André sat against it, resembled those doctors who emerge from the depths of Rembrandt's dark canvases. Cécile was now gazing at him with a sort of terror, as if the scientist was about to commence some sinister, formidable work.

He had drawn from his pocket a phial with a ground-glass stopper, which he held a moment in his thin fingers, and poured upon his handkerchief a few drops that he raised to André's nostrils.

"Chloroform," he said. "Nothing more simple."

He kept the handkerchief forcibly in its place, compelling the artist to inhale the evaporations and, at the same time, consulting the young man's pulse, his thumb upon the artery.

André's eyes, at first open as if fixed with curiosity upon the doctor, gradually closed; the anæsthetic was doing its work, and the patient's handsome head leaned against the back of the chair, the face pale, the lips raising the dark mustache in a sort of rapturous smile, while the body, languidly outstretched, assumed an attitude of relaxation, gradually becoming motionless as in sleep or death.

Jean Klipper was now bending over André's chest, listening to the beating of the heart, his fingers still applied to the wrist.

André, his eyes closed, no longer seemed to breathe.

"Good Heavens, Doctor," said Cécile, "you are very sure—there is no danger?"

"None, Madame; the inhalation was quick; he is under the influence of the anæsthetic."

"Does he hear?"

"No. Perhaps he is dreaming. If he is, so much

the better. I had thought of giving him hasheesh, but one is not master of the mad visions of the *Madjoum,* the green paste. With chloroform or ether, it is sleep. We are masters of the awakening."

"Now," the little man added, "he must be carried to bed."

Cécile pressed an electric button.

"Do what the doctor orders you," she said to Aurèle.

Klipper desired André to be undressed. The sensation that he would experience on waking in bed, with his head on a pillow, would be more vivid.

The valet, assisted by the porter, carried the sleeping André down to the apartment. Cécile followed with an aching heart on seeing the two men descending the staircase step by step, carrying the body which seemed like a corpse.

"This is frightful," she said.

But the Alsatian, smiling, repeated:

"Nothing, it is nothing. You will see!"

Undressed, carried to his bed, André Fortis, under the tapestry tester, seemed even more than before to be sleeping the last sleep. The bony framework of his forehead shone upon the pillow with the whiteness of a winding sheet. And the closed eyes, the half-open mouth, the enigmatic smile, full of *the be-*

yond, as if, with the last sigh, he had seen a supreme vision.

"I am afraid," Cécile repeated in a very low tone; "I am afraid."

"Why, no; put your mind at rest. You will see to-morrow."

"Merciful Heavens! are you going to leave him so until to-morrow?"

"No, no. But to-morrow I will renew the experiment, and to-morrow evening André David will no longer exist. A pleasant journey to him!"

And while the young wife went nearer to the bed where André Fortis was still sleeping, he said:

"Nothing is more useful than anæsthesia, chloroforming, etherizing, to draw from the body its moral secret. Conscripts pretend to be hunchbacked; they are put to sleep; their simulated hump disappears. Madmen who cannot be cured are submitted to chloroform. They grow quiet, and their reason may return. Maniacs who persist in sullen silence are etherized, and they talk. Criminals confess; those who are feigning insanity betray themselves. Truth issues, not from a well, but from our phials. And you will see, you will see to-morrow."

"To-morrow?"

"To-morrow I shall bring to your husband the proof of his deliverance. I have told you about

Malebranche's leg of mutton, I think. No? Well, I will tell you.''

He remained beside André until the effects of the opiate passed off, and when the artist, astonished, found himself lying in his bed, seeking, in the chaos of his first confused impressions, how he could awake there, with a strange sensation of emptiness in his brain, Dr. Klipper quickly reassured him.

''You are not ill, Monsieur Fortis, but you are subjected until to-morrow to a very special regimen, not painful. I need to have you sleep, sleep for a long time. During your slumber, I will work for you. You know the proverb: happiness comes while we are sleeping. One must not always believe in proverbs. But sometimes they are truths.''

André listened, amazed, his mind a little astray, as if in a dream.

''Your husband will be able to eat and drink what he likes until to-morrow,'' added Klipper, giving Cécile a prescription he had just written on a leaf torn from his notebook. ''But I desire that he should take half a glass of this potion every two hours.''

''Which is—'' asked André.

''Oh! nothing serious! A sedative, a composing draught. Then, my dear sir, I'll come back to-morrow! From now until to-morrow, stay in bed! Rest is the best medicine!''

"Stay in bed without being ill?"

"Stay in bed in order to be ill no longer!" said the doctor, smiling. "Good-by until to-morrow!"

Cécile, a little anxious, and not fully understanding, followed him to the door of the house.

But the strange little man, shrugging his shoulders, did not even let her express her fears.

"I tell you, Madame, that this experiment is necessary. I need a few bewildered hours in that head which sleep is going to soothe. The potion I am ordering will continue the state of somnolence which I require. The thought, the settled idea, the terror of the *Double* will sleep at the same time, and to-morrow—"

This word, constantly repeated, seemed tragical to Cécile, full of mingled fears and hopes.

"To-morrow, Doctor!"

"Well, to-morrow you will see, you will see!"

And Jean Klipper went back to the Place de Valois, where Marthe, little accustomed to seeing him go out, was waiting for him.

XIII

MORTUARY LETTER

"SCIENCE is amusing," said Dr. Klipper that evening at dinner to his blind wife, whose mind saw, actually saw what the master's words evoked before her; "amusing, confess it. To pursue at the same time the solution of two problems, one gigantic, the other curious, paradoxical, and solve them both at once. It is exciting!"

"Then," asked Marthe, "Monsieur Fortis?"

"Will be cured to-morrow! Fallen asleep as when, after a child is born, we present it to the mother and she smiles, I will bring him deliverance and he will be happy."

"And I?" said the young wife.

"You!—I am on the eve of success! I feel that soon, dear heart, I shall no longer torture you, and you will see, see the vast universe."

"Strassburg!" gently interrupted the old Alsatian Anna, who was serving the dinner.

And, nodding gravely at the tone of entreaty, Jean Klipper answered:

"Strassburg!"

To the old woman, this was the "real world." To Klipper, it was the native place.

"You will no longer suffer," he repeated.

"I do not suffer!"

"Your forehead?"

"Gives me no pain!"

Klipper's piercing eyes seemed to be seeking in the center of the burn which marked the spot where the rays of his machine converged, the fissure through which the fantastic eye, the complementary eye, the unexpected eye, the third eye, the eye forgotten by Mother Nature, was to appear. His faith in his discovery was such that, in a sort of hallucinatory certainty, it seemed as if he saw in Marthe's brow an eye emerge, a light around which the sloughs of the burns formed a sort of red halo.

"To-morrow," he said to the young wife, as he had just said to Cécile. "To-morrow we shall see again, my beloved Marthe! And it would be strange if to-morrow I should solve the two problems at once."

A smile which he did not notice passed over Marthe's lips, a smile at first sorrowful, as if saddened by a doubt, then radiant, full of joy, as if after having thought, "I have waited so long for this *to-morrow,*" she was thinking: "Since he says that the

day has come, the day *has* come, a Jean Klipper is not deceived.''

The next morning, the physician went to Fortis with what he called salvation in his pocket.

''Yes! A positive remedy!'' he said to Marthe.

''Which is—?'' she asked.

''Oh! the most commonplace thing in the world. A scrap of paper. I have it with my phial of chloroform!''

A scrap of paper! Marthe did not even ask for any explanations, leaving Klipper to his plans, which she trustingly admired. But André and Cécile had the same absolute faith in the little man with the burning eyes.

The physician found Fortis in bed as he had ordered, but a little impatient, tired of staying there. The face of the artist on the pillow brightened when he saw the scientist.

''I don't ask you how you are,'' said the latter. ''You are looking splendidly.''

''And I'm crazy to go out, to move around. It seems as if I am a prisoner.''

''Exactly. A prisoner who will be released today.''

Cécile had accompanied Klipper to her husband's bedside. She felt an anxious joy at seeing a flame of hope, of ardent hope pass into André's eyes. That

word *release* had completely illuminated the thin face, still wasted by so much uneasiness which, on the pillow, resembled the emaciated countenance of a dying man.

Ah! if at last—at last—Jean Klipper wrought this miracle of restoring to the unfortunate man the absolute feeling of his sole personality! Release! Release! The word rang in André's ears like a chime of festal bells.

"To-day?" he asked again, like a captive who thinks he hears the bolt of his cell slip—for the last time.

"To-day I will give you the proof that André David—"

"*The Other—?*"

"*The Other* is no longer to be feared and will never return. *Never, never more,* as Poe says, but this time the refrain is consoling."

He had drawn from his pocket the phial he had already used the evening before and, asking Cécile for a handkerchief, wet the cambric with a few drops, poured, counted one by one—then, leaning over the bed, he quickly placed on André's lips, beneath his nostrils, the linen saturated with chloroform.

And, with burning eyes fixed upon the face of the young man, who was again gradually, slowly, lapsing into slumber, he held his wrist, counted the pulse, and

said as if he would have driven the words one by one into André's ears:

"You know? This André, the persecutor, the enemy, André David? He is ill, very ill! He is dying!"

André Fortis's lips, under the handkerchief which compressed them, murmured vague words, repeated, but stammeringly, those uttered by Klipper: "Ill—ill—dy—ing," and the wild eyes seemed to be seeking in the dim light of the recess some unknown thing, a phantom.

It seemed to him, while he was falling asleep, as if he were sinking slowly, gently, with a soft, gliding movement, into space, into darkness, among shadows, which were suddenly pervaded by strange sonorous sounds—heard before and which he abruptly recognized—the Satanic voices of "Manfred," that "Manfred" which, for the first time, had shaken his nerves, made this phantom appear, evoked *The Other*.

And with these distant echoes of Schumann mingled a memory of the "Poet's Life" by Charpentier, the sharp, sarcastic cries of madness or intoxication cutting short the bacchanalian finale, emphasizing the delirium and despair of the poet fallen from his dream, slain by the impotent doubt. And while the chloroform was doing its work, in the slumber caused by Klipper, André beheld, bending over him like an

incubus, stifling him like Smarra, the face of André David, his ego, his second "ego," fierce, haunting, whose jeering laugh resembled the sarcasms in the "Poet's Life," the diabolical ironies of "Manfred."

Then André Fortis had an eager desire to struggle, to start up, to drive away the specter, to stretch his arms toward him, try to seize him, sink his nails into his eyes—those harassing eyes that seemed to be staring at André lying there. And, as if Dr. Klipper had divined by an intuition of genius what was passing beneath this skull—deciphered the thought even through the bones—the old Alsatian repeated, slipped into the artist's ear before sleep came, to give him this last sensation, this final affirmation:

"All that you see is only a lie. You will know the real truth on awakening. Sleep, sleep, sleep! The evil dream is over, on the word of Klipper. You will see."

Then sleep rose, rose, like a beneficent tide; and as the chloroform took effect Fortis felt a sense of quiet, of coolness in the commotion of confused hypnogagic images that danced before him, pallid as masks, and glittering like luminous atoms.

Then the lashes drooped over the startled eyes which had become troubled and, under the action of the chloroform, André Fortis fell asleep.

Then, when the anæsthesia was complete, the little

man shook his head with its long white hair, took from his overcoat pocket his shabby leather wallet and drew out a paper with a wide black border, a mourning letter, which he unfolded, read in a very low tone, and showed to frightened Cécile.

The startled wife had seen André's name on this funeral letter.

She drew back in alarm and, pointing to the mournful sheet, said in a choked voice:

"What is this?"

"Oh! read it!" replied Klipper coldly.

Cécile's trembling hand took the black-bordered letter the doctor held out to her and, with eyes dilated by terror, the young wife read these words printed under a black cross forming the heading and surrounding the M of the address:

You are invited to be present at the funeral procession, service, and burial of

Monsieur André David,

Artist.

Died January 20th, 1901, in his 32nd year.

Which will take place the 22nd instant, at 1 o'clock precisely, at the church of Saint-Etienne-du-Mont, his parish.

De Profundis!

The letter at which Cécile was gazing in bewilderment contained also a list of relatives, to whose names she paid little heed, and this information: *After the*

ceremony the body will be conveyed to Saint-Laurent-du-Pont, his birthplace.

The poor wife, holding between her fingers the mourning paper, questioned with her glance the scientist, whose eyes were now sparkling with a strange light, ironically joyous.

"Here is safety," said Klipper at last. "The persecutor is dead! When your husband has in his hands the proof that André David is dead, he will not fear the apparition of *The Other*. I am killing the phantom. No more phantom! And André Fortis will be able to live happily!"

"Then," said Cécile, who did not take her eyes from the letter, "it is you—?"

"I, who, to materialize the confidence which I desire to thrust into the brain of André Fortis, have imagined the death and burial of André David, the specter, that André David who exists only in the imagination of André Fortis and whom I am suppressing! But the most astonishing"—and the little man's shaven face wore a sardonic smile—"the most curious thing, which proves that everything is possible and that everything happens, is that André Fortis will be able later, if he feels any doubt, to take the journey to Saint-Laurent-du-Pont. He will there find the tomb of an André David, and be able to read the name on the stone, as you read it on the letter of announce-

ment. I wanted to leave nothing to chance. I have written, inquired, questioned. And I located this tomb of a dead man who at first was non-existent, only when I had given to me the very spot where your husband, if necessary, could read the name of this André David. *Yes, yes,* I stirred up some people whom I know in the Funeral Company—though I do not leave my cellar, I have my acquaintances, too, and the Funeral Companies and the doctors have their relations, of course. Yes, yes. They live by one another. They searched, searched, searched! And in Dauphiny, the tomb of an André David, an artist—everything happens, everything is possible—was found. He had just died. The mayor and the prefect certify it. And here it is! Aha! the scientists! The scientists could also be novelists. And what is science, Madame? A romance!"

Cécile listened, wondering if she were not dreaming, if this was not a madman, who thus played with life and death, suppressing by anæsthesia a living being, erasing with a scratch of the pen, a fictitious letter, a being who did not exist.

She gazed at Klipper in bewilderment, and yet had a very clear impression that the scientist was trying an experiment in psychotherapy and did not exceed his rights as a rescuer.

"It is by the mind that psychoneuroses are treated and cured," he had often said.

The tremendous trick of André David was for the doctor one of those mental methods which he had the right to employ.

But if André, André when awake, once more conscious, did not believe in the final disappearance, the death of the specter, the departure of *The Other!*

There he was, in bed, sunk in slumber, and Klipper was waiting until the chloroform had finished its work to place before the artist's eyes this proof, the evidence itself.

The minutes seemed to Cécile ages, hours of infinitely long torture, up to the moment when André again opened his eyes, came out of the slumber as if dazed, looked around him, trying to understand.

He glanced from Klipper, seated near him, to Cécile, standing beside his bed, questioning without understanding; his ideas were floating, confused, in his mind.

At last he said:

"What is it? What has happened?"

Cécile awaited, as if it were a sentence, the doctor's reply.

"Oh! something very important," said Klipper slowly.

A little startled, André Fortis exclaimed like a cry:

"What is it, then? What?"

"What? Why, you are a happy mortal, my friend! Your enemy, your shadow, your double, you know—"

André looked by turns at his wife and the doctor.

"Well, Doctor?"

"Well! But to the point, read!" said Klipper, holding out to André, who raised himself in bed, the black-bordered letter that Cécile had just been holding.

And the husband's question was the same as the wife's:

"What does this mean?"

"Look."

André, in his turn, began to read the letter. He repeated aloud:

"*You are invited to be present at the funeral procession, service, and burial of Monsieur André David, artist, died—*"

Then, suddenly interrupting himself, springing, half clad, out of bed, "What?" he said, in a great cry of surprise and almost of triumph; "André David? *He? The Other?*—Dead?"

"And buried," said Klipper coldly.

Cécile felt her heart beating like the iron weight of a clock.

"Dead?" André Fortis repeated.

He continued the reading of the letter, went over it again, examined the dates:

"This is the 20th of February."

"The 20th of February, at twenty minutes past eleven in the morning," said Klipper again. "*The Other* has rested for a month beneath the tombstone in his village! And you know the famous proverb: 'It is only the dead who do not return!' A false proverb in politics, for the dead do return and call themselves martyrs."

"*André David, artist, died January 20th, 1901, in his 32nd year,*" again read Fortis, turned to Cécile, and said:

"My age! He was my age, as he had my face!"

"Now," said the Alsatian, jestingly, "he no longer has anything! You'll never see him again! Ended! Hi! Smoke!"

"Smoke!"

"Or corruption. Think no more about it. You are free!"

André Fortis, as if beset by those magnetic lines, returned to the black-bordered letter, and repeated, as if to engrave the words upon his brain, the name:

"*You are invited to be present at the funeral procession, service, and burial of Monsieur André David—*"

"But why," he said suddenly, "didn't I know this a month ago?"

Klipper, still keeping his quizzical expression, replied:

"Remember! This is not the first time that I have put you to sleep! I will answer as in the Residuary Legatee: 'It is your lethargy!' The main point is that *He* is no longer here, *He!*"

"*The Other!*" said André.

He added:

"At Saint-Laurent-du-Pont! I saw that place once on my way to la Chartreuse! It is there he sleeps?"

"And don't go there either to wake him, or to thrust a sword into his heart as was done to the vampires," said the doctor. "Peace to the dead, and life to the living!"

He held out his thin hands to the young man, who pressed them with ardent emotion.

"Well," said the doctor, darting into André's eyes a gaze almost as scorching as the sparks of his laboratory, "will you believe me now; will you feel that you are delivered?"

"Yes," replied André.

"You are yourself! *The Other* has vanished!—come, kiss your wife! You will both be happy forever!"

"Forever! Yes, I feel it, my darling! Forever!"

He had rushed to Cécile and was holding her in his arms; he caressed her forehead with his hand, he kissed her closed lids, as he had done the night before their wedding. And it was indeed a new marriage that would begin, a life without terror, trusting, free, the life of the prisoner who sees before him the open sky, the clear road, space.

"Oh! how I worship you, my Cécile!"

"My dear André!"

"And how I love you, too, Doctor, for having given me the strength to live!"

"And the joy of seeing him buried, *him!*"

André, who was radiant with delight, became serious.

"That is true," he said; "all this joy is founded upon the death of *The Other!*"

"Oh! don't pity the dead," said Dr. Klipper. "They are the travelers who have arrived. We still have to pursue our way. Let us do so like people who know the value of happiness. The fragments are rarer, and cost even more, than those of radium."

He was in haste to leave André and Cécile alone. He was also in haste to rejoin Marthe. Since he was lucky to-day, he wanted to carry his researches in the laboratory farther.

"Now," he said, "I will leave you to yourselves!

Be certain that never—you hear, never—will *The Other* reappear! He sleeps and will sleep soundly. You are thoroughly convinced of it?"

"Absolutely," replied André, with a firmness of faith.

"You no longer fear anything?"

"Nothing," said the artist again.

His eyes never left the letter with its mourning border, from which—strange irony—beamed an impression of happy deliverance.

With a clasp of the hand into which she put her whole soul, Cécile, in a fervent tone, thanked the doctor, whose smile emphasized this joy with a sort of irony, and asked:

"Doctor, will you let me kiss you?"

"With pleasure," replied the Alsatian, turning his thin cheeks to meet the young wife's lips.

"You will carry this kiss to your dear Marthe—a saint!" said Cécile.

She added in a tone so low that André could not hear:

"And here, too, you have restored a human being to light!"

Dr. Klipper put a finger on his lips:

"I have killed a parasite, that is all," he said. "It is my trade! But confess that it required patience, long search, and luck (the great collaborator, luck)

to find in a distant cemetery a dead man who bore the name of the one whom I desired to banish, to banish forever. However, the real André David was not exactly the age of the André David in my letter of announcement; he was much older. But mortuary letters are not expected to tell the whole truth. Coquettish women do not frame their ages with a black border. The important thing is that there should be this name, *André David,* on the paper, *André David* yonder on the stone, and that *André David* should no longer reappear in the Rue Murillo! Farewell, Madame!''

XIV

THE GRAIN OF SAND

Dr. Klipper went out very joyously from this apartment, where he left André in the fullness of his confidence—*The Other* crushed, driven away, buried, already almost forgotten, like all the dead—and took a cab to return more quickly to the house in the Place de Valois, the cellar where his instruments awaited him.

Luncheon was also waiting for him there. He ate heartily, humming old Strassburg airs learned in his childhood. Then he said to Marthe:

"It is a good day, I want to finish it! I have worked for others; I want to work for myself! For you, my darling! You are not tired?"

"No."

"Well! Perhaps Madame Fortis is right: I have restored her husband to light by confidence. Possibly to-day—this very day—I shall arrive at the result I covet for you! For you! Ah! what a dream!"

"And Monsieur Fortis is cured?"

"Cured, because he believes. Cured, because I

have slain, not the mandarin who makes him rich, but the phantom who made him doubt himself. Cured, because for one illusion I have substituted another. *Ecco!* And this is life! Yet no, there is no illusion. André David, who, if he had not had his living life, would not have had a funeral, would not have a tomb in Saint-Laurent-du-Pont, really did exist, since imagination created him! His life was a fact, since André Fortis suffered from it. His death is a fact, since the letter of announcement is there. *Requiescat!* And henceforth reassured, strengthened, operated upon for his phantom André Fortis will live, as if from a cured cancer! As you will live, you, dear one, with that new eye, that I want to see emerge from your forehead, yes, yes, to-day, Marthe, to-day, to-day!''

He was growing excited, talking, gesticulating, and old Anna said to him, while serving the dessert:

''Take care, sir; calm yourself; you will have a fever.''

''Fever?'' asked Marthe anxiously.

''Yes, Madame, fever. Madame doesn't see my master, but his ears are red, and he is getting congested—that isn't good!''

But Klipper interrupted the servant:

''I am not red at all! Don't believe it. *'Madame does not see my master, Madame does not see!'* Well!

Madame will see! She will see me! She will see us, Anna! She will see that my ears are not red. Madame will see everything! And perhaps this very day! *Yes, yes,* to-day! to-day! I am lucky to-day! Good for to-day!''

Klipper's voice, like a bugler sounding the charge, gave the blind woman absolute confidence. Marthe was persuaded that she was approaching the end of that long trial, which led her daily beneath the projection of the electric light as if under the stab of a fiery lance. She did not complain that she suffered, that she felt on her forehead the scorching wound. She obeyed, she hoped. *The master had spoken.* Yet it was an unexpected joy to hear Klipper talk of the end of the experiments, and to believe in speedy, perhaps immediate success.

''We will go down to the laboratory,'' he said.

With unusual excitement he took a candle to light his way down the dark stairway, and held out his hand to Marthe.

''Lean on me.''

The blind wife, her hand in the doctor's, went slowly down the steps leading to the cellar, whose door Klipper pushed open and, there, groping with her foot for the stone steps, she tried, with the fingers of her free hand, to touch the wall. Her other hand remained in Klipper's. They walked on thus be-

neath the vault whose damp odor guided Marthe, as she counted the stairs one by one, plunging into this darkness which, to her, was no blacker than the eternal night which surrounded her.

Suddenly she felt a sensation of terrible cold. She felt Klipper's hand release hers, heard a cry in the darkness, then a dull sound, the sound of a falling body. And nothing more. No, nothing, silence. Groping, she sought for the hand that was guiding her a moment before. She could find nothing. Vacancy!

She called:

"Jean! Where are you, Jean?"

Jean Klipper did not answer. Was it he who had just fallen several steps below her, and whose plunge she had heard?

The sinister sound was still in her ears and on her heart.

"Bang! Bang!"

Oh! it was he, it was certainly he who, stumbling, had just fallen on the stone steps. Where was he? How could she help him? Marthe called again, but Klipper's orders were rigid. No one must come near him when he was working. And no one came in answer to Marthe's cries. Were they even heard up above?

She bent down, slid along the stones, seated, from

step to step, questioning the gloom, seeking with her hand, groping for a prostrate body.

The silence, the terrible silence, alarmed her. What if he were killed? The blind wife's hands felt, sought as she lowered herself step by step toward the spot whence, just now, the stifled cry had come. Still empty space!

Yet, though he did not answer, he was there, in this darkness.

"Jean! Jean!"

A vague echo sent back, from the distance, the name shrieked in anguish, "Jean!"

In her turn, she uttered a cry on meeting an obstacle under her feet, slipped toward another step. Bending forward, she groped with her hand. It was really a prostrate body. Klipper was doubtless lying there at the foot of the staircase, motionless.

Marthe moved her fingers along the form, touched the shoulder, the head, the forehead, and started in horror. The hair that her fingers reached was sticky, as if from some warm fluid, blood! Blood was flowing from that worshiped brow, that august brow of the scientist. She felt it on her trembling hand, and screamed for help. A fearful thought came.

"If he should be dead? He is dead!"

Dead!

And in the darkness, the night to which she was

condemned, the poor wife tried to lift the body, which was perhaps only a corpse. She sought with her lips the face she could not see, the ears in which she repeated her despairing call:

"Jean!"

He did not stir. The body lay inert in the darkness. And she could not raise, relieve him. If Klipper, thus stricken down, his forehead doubtless fractured, should die near her, she could not struggle for him with this awful death.

Then the fragile creature, the little timid fair wife, found within herself an unexpected, superhuman energy. Groping, she crept up the stairs again until she felt before her the door opening upon the ground-floor and, pushing it suddenly wide, she screamed, uttered a loud shriek of distress, which was heard by the janitor and also old Anna, who was just coming down.

"Help! Help! The doctor is killed!"

They ran to his assistance. Dr. Klipper, picked up at the foot of the stairway, was carried, bleeding, to his apartment. He was not dead.

With his forehead fractured—his foot having slipped on some step—he was seriously injured. Marthe, anxious, condemned to darkness, questioned earnestly. She was encouraged. A neighboring physician hurried in, and applied a first dressing.

He was a young man, who was acquainted with the work of the Strassburg physician and, when he saw him lying prostrate, said:

"What a misfortune it would be!"

But Klipper recovered consciousness. At first he stammered a few words; then he called Marthe.

"Are you there, Marthe?"

"I am here, my love!"

Jean took her hand, the hand that he had loosed just now in falling.

"What has happened to me?"

Then, as he suddenly remembered:

"Ah! yes, we were going to work." Then suddenly—"There is a fable of La Fontaine's: *The astrologer who let himself fall into a well.* Yes, yes, we study the stars, the star!—and we stupidly fall into a cellar!"

He seemed surprised to see a new face by his bedside.

"Who are you?"

"One of your admirers, my dear Master," replied the young doctor.

"Ah! my admirers! My admirers are few! But when I shall have endowed mankind with the third eye! To-day, perhaps, to-day, Marthe!"

He was becoming excited. The fever was rising.

"Calm yourself, my dear Master!"

"No, no, to-day; I want my final experiment to take place to-day. You don't believe in the third eye?"

"The pineal gland? Certainly, my dear Master. You will find it. If you seek, you will find!"

An expression of intense pride illumined the sick man's face. He saw himself understood, comprehended by a man of the new generation. He said to Marthe:

"You see, people have faith in me!"

And she, the believer, raised the scientist's thin hand to her lips and kissed it, as she would have done that of a prophet, or of her God.

Then the wounded man grew sleepy and a sort of coma took possession of body and brain. The young physician grew uneasy, giving expression to his fears in the words he repeated, shaking his head:

"It would be a pity!"

XV

DISAPPEARANCE

A SHORT paragraph in the newspaper, among various other facts, informed André and Cécile of the accident of which Dr. Klipper had been the victim. They went hurriedly to the Place de Valois. But no one was admitted to see the injured man.

Only Marthe came to thank them, and André said to the poor wife:

"He is the man who saved me! He will be saved in his turn."

The Fortises went daily to inquire for news. Sometimes it was alarming, sometimes reassuring. They did not know. A mystery was hovering over and around the sick man.

André had the feeling that something was being concealed.

This is what they were hiding: the fall on the stairs had caused a lesion in Klipper's brain so that the light of reason which he had showed after regaining consciousness, was slowly darkened. A dense mist now enveloped that wonderful, penetrat-

ing intelligence. The young physician, a distinguished psychiatrist, had summoned the most skillful medical men. Their verdict gave no hope. The great Jean Klipper was doomed to progressive degeneration, destined to irrationality, worse than that, to be only a being leading a purely animal, brute life—like the idiots wandering about the courtyards of asylums.

Then Marthe—who saw nothing, but demanded that she should be told everything—was not willing that any human eye should perceive this degradation of a worshiped, venerated being—a great heart, a genius. And she hid from every visitor, every question, this wreck of humanity that she clasped in her arms and disputed with disease. He recovered, but reason did not return.

And one day, when André Fortis went to the apartment in the Place de Valois for news, the janitor said:

"There's nobody there now!"

"What?"

"Monsieur and Madame Klipper have gone."

"Gone? And where are they?"

"We don't know."

"In Strassburg?"

"I don't know."

"Can I speak to old Anna?"

"No. She isn't here. She went with them. Oh! she was too much attached to Monsieur Klipper. And Madame Klipper, who is blind, needed her too much for her to leave her. That good Anna is a woman who would deserve the Montyon prize."

"And if I write to the doctor?"

"He will not receive your letter."

"If I write to him here?"

The janitor pointed to the notice he was going to put on the door of number 4:

"*Apartment to let.* The apartment is empty, and Madame Klipper would not give us her new address."

"Then no one can know—"

"No one!"

"Not even I!"

André returned home very sorrowful. It seemed as if he had lost a lifelong friend. He was robbed of an affection, a reason for showing a human being his hourly gratitude.

When he told Cécile what had been said to him, with the admirable instinct women possess when they love, she divined the truth.

She divined that Marthe wished to hide some diminution of Klipper's genius, as she herself would have concealed the sinister attacks of André Fortis in the time of *The Other*—that *Other* whom Klipper had driven away forever.

"If they don't wish to have people know where they have taken refuge, we must not seek," she said. "Misfortune has its modesty as well as love."

But with a sob interrupting his words, André came to Cécile one morning holding out a newspaper, where his nail marked a passage, and said:

"Look!"

Frédéric Clément announced in the *Boulevard,* the death, in a secluded spot of a suburb in Paris, of a man whom Paris did not know, but who, if he had lived, would have convulsed science, Dr. Jean Klipper, one of the irregulars of genius, who are the pioneers of the future.

The doctor had died requesting that his funeral services should be without witnesses. No letters of invitation had been sent, Madame Klipper, as always, respecting her husband's wishes.

The journalist added:

"Less will be said of the disappearance of this scientist who (we formerly mentioned it briefly in one of our reports) was dreaming of adding a supplementary eye to the human race, of finding once more the eye of the Cyclops; there will be less sensation over it than concerning the first performance of the operetta that is to be given this evening. And this is very natural. The operetta which is to appear will amuse with its music and its waltzes.

The scientist who departs makes less stir. Give way to the theater! But the man of genius will have his compensation, and we will undertake, on our part, to work for it.''

Cécile had read the reporter's article through her tears. She gave the paper back to her husband.

André shook his head, his heart crushed, his eyes reddened.

General de Jandrieu and his wife, who came to call, surprised their children amid the grief of this news.

''What is it?'' said the general, trying to laugh. ''A family scene? You have been quarreling! You, a pattern couple!''

''No,'' said Cécile, ''oh! there is only joy with us. But we have lost a man to whom we owe the greater part of this happiness!''

''A man of genius,'' said André.

The general, surprised, shrugged his shoulders.

''I have seen so many dead men, so many, so many. I was thinking of it this very morning, the 18th of August, the anniversary of Gravelotte! One must be an old relic to think of Gravelotte, eh! my children! —Yet I do think of it!—Your Dr. Klipper is dead! —Each in his turn! We must always be ready, saddled, packed, bridled.''

"But this man did not kill, he saved!" cried André. "A man of genius!"

"I have often wondered what is meant by a man of genius," said the general, ironically grave. "Do you want me to tell you? It is a man who is not known!"

XVI

THE STATUE OF THE LIVING DEAD

DEATH resembles the night which kindles the stars. It suddenly makes the name of the man unknown the day before shine brilliantly. An unexpected light issues from the tomb.

Scarcely had the report of Dr. Klipper's tragical end been spread abroad, than laudatory biographies informed the masses of the extraordinary importance of the unknown man whom science had just lost. The professional magazines enumerated the studies of the investigator, and the official scientists eulogized the discoveries of this independent who had fought in the vanguard, working alone and in the shadow. And the public at large learned with bewilderment that it had elbowed, without suspecting it, a man who would have deserved a statue.

A statue! The idea did not fall into empty space. The *Revue des Sciences Nouvelles* having printed the word under Dr. Chardin's signature, the Parisian press took up the project. Frédéric Clément, the head of the numerous reporters of the *Boulevard,*

began by a very touching preface and a series of interviews upon the life and works of Jean Klipper. After having, like a good journalist, made game of the fever for statues, the *statuomania* that rages at the present day, he questioned the majority of the great scientists as to whether the child of Strassburg, after having devoted a whole existence to science, after having lived and suffered for it, deserved a pedestal, an image in a public square or not.

Almost all the answers published in the *Boulevard* were in favor of a manifestation in Klipper's honor. Bust or statue, the Alsatian scholar deserved some tribute. And for an entire week, Paris, between two conversations upon the recent *first night* and the latest scandal, Paris slightly forgetting the stage, the fashionable crimes, and the examinations of the magistrates, occupied itself with Dr. Klipper as if the point in question were an actor on a poster, an Apache who had committed another crime, or a heroine of some restaurant affair.

Besides, Frédéric Clément, with much art, had presented as possible, as probable, the remarkable discovery of Dr. Klipper in endowing mankind with a third eye, a third window open upon the life of the universe. The reporter had entitled his series of articles, his visits, and interviews: *A magician of the XIX century*, and thanks to him, to the masses

the investigator's figure had assumed the fantastic aspect of another Dr. Faust bending over his alembics. The public, interested by Klipper's life and death, had read this dramatized biography and the successive opinions of the scientists, as it would have devoured a serial romance by Wells or Rudyard Kipling.

"How had such a man lived in the midst of Paris without having the fame that goes directly to politicians or writers, send to this brow henceforth cold, to this name henceforth celebrated, one ray of that renown which it lavishes upon the ordinary, the climbers, and the adventurers?"

Frédéric Clément developed this theme with vehemence, rousing public opinion. People were irritated at the injustice of fate. All the misunderstood, the defeated, those whom fortune left in the lurch, incarnated their demands in this unknown genius, *Jean Klipper.* And very naturally, the wrath of Paris against the ignorance of man, and the injustice of fate, reverberated in Alsace. Klipper's countrymen felt both more proud and more sorrowful than the Parisians themselves over that destiny whose glory was reflected upon their beloved little native land. "It is in France that he struggled, in France that he will rest," said the *Journal d'Alsace,* "but Alsace gave him birth."

Then the idea grew, expressed by the *Alsacien-Lorraine,* to erect in Strassburg a monument to the scientist whom the Academies and the French periodicals were thus hailing as a harbinger. A committee was very quickly formed that sent out an appeal for funds and, in the emotion aroused by Frédéric Clément's "Inquest," the subscription rapidly mounted to quite a considerable sum. Enough money to erect a statue was very speedily obtained.

A statue to Jean Klipper in this Strassburg which had not raised one to Kœberle! Controversies now began. Patriotic rivalries were concealed under singular pretexts. The German authorities feared that students of Alsatian race and French hearts might profit by the inauguration of this statue to offer significant wreaths and pay the homage which these young men, every Christmas midnight, gave to the statue of Kleber. And really had Jean Klipper, with his visions, admirable, perhaps, but merely visions, deserved the same honor as this Jean Gutenberg, whose bronze image Strassburg had formerly solemnly saluted "in the time of the French"?

At last an agreement was reached by accepting a compromise. The partisans of the statue gave up the pedestal, the adversaries accepted the proposal of a bust—a bronze bust set in the wall of the house

where the scientist was born, and beneath the effigy an inscription informing the passer-by that this was Jean Klipper's birthplace.

The tribute was as solemn and, for the German government, the ceremony no longer had the same popular and consequently perilous character. The inauguration of a bust in a little street in Old Strassburg could not attract as large a crowd as a statue erected in a public square.

"It is a semi-danger," said the German papers.

"And a semi-concession," answered, scarcely satisfied, the Alsatian committee.

Klipper's bust, executed by a young Strassburg sculptor from an admirable sketch formerly made from life by J. J. Henner, had been exhibited in the Salon. It well represented the peculiar countenance, the pensive gauntness of this Michelet or Mommsen-like visage. And the critics had had no great difficulty in discerning, too late, beneath the thoughtful brow, the man of genius.

The citizens of Strassburg, as ignorant of Dr. Klipper's investigations as the Parisians, saw in the tribute rendered only a remembrance given to one of their countrymen living and dying on the *other side,* a son of Alsace transplanted to the great city. It seemed to them that, beyond the frontier, Paris was sending back, gloried and greater, a child of

the native land. And it was in truth the native land which had received, if not welcomed the scientist bent over his investigations. It was Paris that, a little later, had discovered Jean Klipper and restored him to Strassburg, enveloped in glory,—a tardy, a posthumous glory. What destiny gives you must be accepted.

It was a great holiday when the committee escorted from the station to the Rue de la Mesange the Paris delegates who had come to salute the image of Jean Klipper. The residents of Strassburg draped with flags of the colors of their country—red and white —the neighboring windows. In this Strassburg flag a third color was lacking, a color which the pretty girls wore on their bosoms by adding cornflowers to the poppies and white daisies. But it was at least Alsace with her flag waving in the sunshine welcoming an Alsatian.

Dr. Chardin had hastened from Paris, desiring to pay the departed scientist the debt of science. He would speak, not in the name of the Academy of Medicine, but in his own person. The testimony of an official representative of French science was no less important. It was a master saluting a master.

The *Boulevard* reporter, Frederic Clément, who was prevented from taking the journey to Alsace be-

cause, on the same day, a Theatre of Nature was to be opened with a translation from the Greek at a watering-place, had telegraphed after reading the proof sheets of the speech sent to the paper:

"It is a splendid page, dear Doctor. When people can speak in this way, they are ready for the tribune!"

Perhaps Chardin was of the same opinion.

And André Fortis had desired to take, with Cécile, the journey to Strassburg that was to him like a pilgrimage of gratitude. All his peace of mind, his liberation, his deliverance, the joy he now had in life, in keeping his youth, in loving the exquisite creature who was his wife, in hoping for children, in giving himself completely to his art, in having seen the specter fly forever—this calmness, these hopes, this new existence, he owed to Jean Klipper. The devotion he could no longer show the scientist, since death had summoned him, he desired to convey, transformed into grateful admiration, to the house where he was born. So, in the very first row of spectators, stood the artist and his wife.

The veil that covered the bust placed above the entrance door of the old building allowed, like a winding sheet, only confused, phantom-like outlines to be seen. Forced into the street and kept there by policemen, the crowd gazed impatiently at this

hidden bust, which was to show them the unknown features of a countryman whose story or rather legend, they told each other. Some of the "old folks" had known little Klipper when, a mere child, he was romping in the street in front of his father's cutler's shop. Since then, it seems, he had become a great, very great scientist down there, in Paris! "A member of the Institute," some said. "Of the Institute, like Pasteur," others answered. They did not know that Klipper was only Klipper.

André, under a beautiful clear spring sky, was looking at this street with its picturesque perspectives, the crowd of pretty girls with pleasant, calm, fair faces; the sturdy, thick-set, square-shouldered young fellows, the flags waving at the windows, and in these windows, as in the pictures of the Middle Ages, odd countenances, profiles of old women, and the chubby faces of children eagerly watching the spectacle in the street.

But André suddenly thought himself bewildered.

XVII

THE APOTHEOSIS

"Look! Look!" cried André to Cécile, pressing her arm.

At one of the windows of a room opposite to the house where Dr. Klipper was born, he had just seen, yes, the longer he gazed the more he thought he recognized a man with emaciated features, framed by white hair falling on his shoulders, a man with a bony face whose eyes were fixed steadily, as if hypnotized, upon the dwelling which concentrated the entire attention of this crowd. And—incredible occurrence—this man resembled feature for feature Jean Klipper in person. Yes, it was another Klipper. The brother garbed in black who resembles the visionary poet like a brother.

"It is impossible! But, if Klipper were not dead, I should say: 'That is he.' "

And what rendered the apparition wholly improbable, maddening, was that, beside this thin, pallid countenance like Klipper's, with hair perhaps longer than formerly, another face was framed in

the open window, the face of a fair-haired young woman, also thin, sorrowful, extremely wan, which summoned up the very visage of Marthe.

Or rather, no, it did not summon it. That was Marthe herself. Marthe with the red spot on her forehead like the admirable stigmata of her devotion and her martyrdom.

Only one woman in the world resembled the one seen yonder. One woman alone bore on her brow the cicatrice of science. There could be no doubt of it, the woman yonder was Marthe Klipper.

But then the man who was leaning his face toward her shoulder, the one who appeared by her side under the locks of an old man, was Jean Klipper himself, Klipper alive, the very Jean Klipper whose bust a whole populace was about to salute while lauding his memory.

"I am not mistaken, Cécile!" said Fortis in a very low tone, his voice choked like that of a child who saw a ghost.

"No," replied Cécile. "It is incredible, but one would swear it was he!"

"And she, her forehead, the red spot—it is Jean Klipper, and it is his wife!"

"It is terrible," said Cécile.

They were not the sport of a hallucination. Both saw at the same time this couple no one noticed,

toward whom no glance strayed, and who from the window overlooked the throng, he with his eyes riveted upon the green serge covering, she casting upon the eddying multitude of curious people and strangers a look that did not see, and which seemed to be seeking in the darkness some familiar faces.

Behind Marthe appeared another figure, a woman who both gazed and saw, old Anna, the faithful, devoted maid-servant. Then André and his wife, to attract the maid's attention better—if it was she, and it was—separated from the line of spectators and took several steps forward into the empty space between the crowd and the house.

No one would notice that they both raised their heads toward the same window on the opposite side of the street. But, as they scrutinized with visible intentness the man and woman leaning over the balcony, old Anna perceived the bewildered, yet searching gaze.

The servant, in a very low tone, said two or three words in Marthe's ear, as if she were pointing out some one in the crowd.

André saw Marthe flush, and draw back a little, while the man, motionless, his eyes steadily fixed, had not made a movement, remaining there as if petrified.

Then, as the eyes of André and Cécile never turned from these two beings, the woman, to whom old Anna continued to talk, gently raised her hand to her mouth, placed two fingers on her lips, with a gesture replacing the look, which, if it could have expressed her thought, would have been full of entreaty. The poor martyr made the sign of silence, imploring from the distance, as if through, above the crowd, Monsieur and Madame Fortis had just divined some mournful secret.

The fingers on the lips, even those eyes, lifeless as if set, petrified by dread, all implored, all seemed to say:

"Not one word! Leave us! Incognito, forgetfulness, is the favor I beseech from you!"

Then André saw the woman's little hand rest on the old man's shoulder, draw him into the room, and the window slowly closed, revealing only through the panes, between the white draped curtains, two pallid faces framed there as if by winding-sheets.

The servant vanished in the shadow.

"It is he! It is Jean Klipper!" repeated André.

"It certainly *is* he!" said Cécile.

Suddenly they divined a terrible drama, the tempest that must have raged in Marthe Klipper's brain when the disaster had happened! The scientist, the man so worshiped and revered, the glory

of her life, recovering from his fall only to drag on a heart-rending existence, surviving in the state of a phantom, a mask, a human rag! Without ideas, perhaps without words, the brain empty, the lips silent, removed, dazed, suppressed from the world of intellect, while trailing his corpse through the universe of living men!

Yes, that was it, that must be it. Klipper had survived, and Marthe Klipper was not willing to have people know how he had lived. And on the great day of a public festival was displayed this amazing spectacle: a man supposed to be dead, whose death was proved by biographical dictionaries, giving the exact date, this man had survived his necrology, reappeared in flesh and blood, no phantom but, from head to foot, alive, present at his own apotheosis.

Alive? The ravaged face, the fixed eyes, the expression of bewilderment that gave this emaciated countenance the appearance of a motionless mask, were they really those of a living man?

No, no, the soul was absent, the brain no longer thought, and (Fortis divined it from the distance) the form that stood there, which could now be seen through the panes, a pallid, haggard mask, was nothing but the specter of Jean Klipper.

A step missed by a foot stumbling in the darkness,

and night forever reigned in a being designed for immortality.

Suddenly in the distance appeared a procession, with banners waving above the crowd. It was the Committee of the Klipper Monument arriving, old residents of Strassburg, contemporaries and playmates of the scientist, marching at the head, and among them Dr. Chardin, wearing a white cravat, not having put on his uniform as an Academician, in which the Alsatians would have found again on the hat the tricolored cockade. The solitary toiler whom they were going to honor was not an *official.*

Bugles sounded a thrilling march, *Sambre-et-Meuse.* One might have thought it a festival of former days, of the old times.

The procession stopped in front of the ancient house, the crowd pressing as near the threshold as possible, and André found himself pushed with Cécile close to Chardin, who had bowed to them, smiling with his red lips, a pleasant, calm face, so different from the tortured one of Klipper.

Then, at a sign from the chairman of the Committee, the serge covering, drawn by a cord, slowly fell, while a brass band, stationed near the door, played with all its instruments an old Alsatian air.

Klipper's bust, fastened into a recently hollowed niche in the wall, shone out, and André again found

in the young sculptor's strangely lifelike work, the features, the expression, the very look—a black look hollowed in the bronze—of the singular man of genius whom he had seen in that cellar in the Cour de Valois, his subterranean laboratory, like a kobold of science.

The bust had the same slightly peculiar fantastic poesy of the inspired little man. The hair seemed to wave, the lips seemed to move, the eyes seemed to see. It was a masterpiece. "A resurrection," said the doctor, who, unfolding a paper taken from his pocket, was already beginning his speech.

At the foot of the bronze bust, an inscription in golden letters glittered on a marble slab:

TO JEAN KLIPPER
DOCTOR AND PHILOSOPHER
BORN AT STRASSBURG, DECEMBER 3D, 1840
DIED AT PARIS OCTOBER 31ST, 1903.
TO THE SON OF ALSACE
HIS GRATEFUL COUNTRYMEN
TO THE SCIENTIST
HIS LOYAL ADMIRERS.

"Resurrection!" It was the word Chardin uttered, it was the impression felt by the very few among those present who had known Jean Klipper.

André Fortis heard, adding their friendly com-

ments to the cheers that greeted Dr. Chardin's praises, expressions of regret and sorrow: "What a misfortune that such men disappear!" And Chardin dwelt upon the disaster Klipper's death had been to science:

"At his age, Gentlemen, the human brain is far from having given its full measure. Imagine Pasteur, our admirable Pasteur, finishing his life at the same age as Jean Klipper. How many discoveries would have remained unknown! How many lives would have been doomed to death! And yet Pasteur was almost lost to his native land and to all mankind. Suppose that when he had his first attack, a little drop of blood, one atom more had reached this marvelous brain, so many discoveries, so much genius would have been suppressed. The clearest, the keenest, the deepest, the most 'divinatory' intelligence, I say, would have sunk into darkness.

"Jean Klipper has not fulfilled his destiny. A trifling accident, an ordinary fall on a staircase—wretched chance—rudely ended a life still so full of projected works, discoveries glimpsed, or rather sketched, and which will be pursued to realization. Klipper had lived unknown. The hour was about to strike when he was to be famous, and honors would succeed trials. And he died.

"Honors! I am using, Gentlemen, a word that our beloved and great fellow-countryman would have repelled. Jean Klipper sought only the rugged duties of toil. Honors, to him, meant work in his dark laboratory, the instruments of labor he manufactured himself, as ingenious in constructing apparatus within an old dark room as in analyzing, in infinite space, the light of the stars.

"He might have been rich, he might have had titles and subsidies. He never asked anything of anyone.

"But, if he did not have the present and what has been called 'ready money glory,' he will have the future, and its posterity that salutes him to-day in this solemn and heartfelt ceremony in which Alsace greets the image of one of her glorious sons, who left this corner of earth when very young, and in which France salutes the child who became with her an immortal old man!"

Dr. Chardin's address closed in a tempest of cheers that emphasized the words of the scientist thus lauding the forerunner, and the band struck up a French air, Gounod's chorus in *Faust*.

"Glory immortal
Of our ancestors."

While Cécile, closing her eyes, was once more seeing the marble image of the musician so many

times dimly perceived through the trees in the Park Monceau—how many memories lingered there—André was watching the pale face pressed against the panes above, the face of Jean Klipper, who reappeared motionless, with fixed eyes.

Then, when the ceremony was ended, when the official procession had gone, when only a few curious persons remained before the house, passers-by coming to read the slab, examine, criticise, or praise the bust, André thanked Chardin, who rolled up his manuscript and thrust it into the pocket of his overcoat.

"I was very sure that I should meet you here," the physician said to the artist.

"Certainly. I shall never forget what I owe you, nor what I owe him. It is said that the sick are forgetful. Not at all. I am no ingrate."

André was tempted to question Chardin, to tell him of this apparition that gave the ceremony a fantastic character. But Chardin was doubtless ignorant of everything, since officially he came, with sincere emotion, to deplore Klipper's death. The wan face was no longer visible behind the closed window. Then why should he betray such a secret?

"I am going back this evening," said Chardin. "Shall you return to Paris with me?"

"Yes, Doctor. But, first I want to call on someone. We will meet at the train."

The call was like a pilgrimage to a tomb—a stop in this house where, in the midst of a day of triumph, the specter of Jean Klipper showed himself.

André and Cécile, as much agitated as on the day of their first visit to Dr. Klipper, went up the narrow stairs of the Alsatian house where Marthe had come to stop a short time with the famous man whose name she bore.

André laid his hand on the wooden railing, saying:

"Have we the right to disturb their silence?"

He had hesitated a moment before ringing the bell on the second story—the one from which Jean Klipper's eyes had watched the ceremony without understanding it. If Marthe should say to them: "By what right do you come to spy upon our suffering, to divine our secret?"

"Let us go!" he said.

Quite a long time passed before the carved door in the eighteenth century wainscoting opened. Then Marthe Klipper's face, mournful and terrified, appeared. Behind her was old Anna, who said to her mistress:

"It is they!"

The poor blind wife, with the stigmatized brow,

again put her finger on her lips, as she had done just now.

Then she said:

"Come in!"

Her voice was low, as if she were faint, exhausted.

Anna asked Monsieur and Madame Fortis to sit down in a little drawing-room whose curtains she had drawn; then Marthe said gently:

"You have seen?"

There was a whole poem of sorrow, of infinite anguish, in the three words.

André's only answer was to bow assent.

"At that time?" said Cécile.

"You will swear to keep the secret?"

"What concerns you, concerns us," said André; "what is your duty is our duty. I owe my life to Jean Klipper."

"And it was in saving others, in trying to restore light, sight, to me, that he fell—"

Then the blind wife related the drama of this destiny. A lesion of the brain disturbed the reason of the old seeker of the impossible. After his fall he remained motionless for hours, his eyes fixed as if looking into space, questioning with his gaze some invisible object. Then one day, in a fit of sudden fury, contrasting strangely with this sort of gently resigned torpor, as if consciousness had re-

turned and with this revelation of his condition, dreading his decline, distracted by grief and horror, shaken by the keen desire to end it all, to escape by death, from stupidity and loss of mind, he opened the window with a madman's gesture, and shouting: "I am free,' he threw himself down to the pavement of the courtyard. A crushed body was picked up. And the newspapers then announced the death of the scientist, but the news was lost in the uproar of an interpellation in the Chamber, and the excitement of a sensational *first night.* The necrological notices briefly buried Jean Klipper, to whom the biographical dictionaries of Leipsic and London devoted an extensive account, mentioning the list of his works, the date of his first experiments, the date of the death,

Officially, therefore, this soldier of the vanguard of science, Jean Klipper, was dead. Yet he lived, survived, and was leading a vegetative existence and, in Montrouge, Marthe Klipper,—turning all her savings into cash, selling everything, clothes and books, —found a boarding-house where, after investing her scanty stock of money in an annuity, she lived, they lived under another name, "Monsieur and Madame Durand." It should not be said that this Jean Klipper, whose genius was vaunted when suddenly discovering it by the funereal light of post-

humous fame, was no longer anything but a foolish, incurable old man, stammering disconnected words, as far from humanity as the beast of burden and the idiot.

Ah! rather than confess this catastrophe, this loss of reason, this horror, Marthe, proud of Klipper's renown, would have lighted a brasier and asphyxiated herself with the worshiped being thus reduced to be nothing more than a phantom of himself. She had thought of it. Then she said to herself: "Patience; everything comes, and death is certain."

And lo! one morning she had learned that Strassburg was going to celebrate the memory of her child. People read to her in the boarding-house at Montrouge the preparations for the ceremony, the programme of the festival: *Inauguration of the bust of Dr. Klipper.* She experienced terrible suffering in repeating what was learned to Klipper, who did not understand, did not comprehend, was brutally banished from the world of living men.

But, whatever grief she might feel, she wanted to be present when the image of Jean Klipper should appear triumphantly before the eyes of his countrymen! She wanted him, too, to be there; the living dead man attending his own apotheosis.

Guided by old Anna, who often came to see her

former employers, and who thus traveled with "Monsieur and Madame Durand," she set out for Strassburg, dragged to his birthplace this unconscious form of the absent genius with the fixed eyes, as incapable of judging what he saw as those of the blind wife. And Marthe Klipper realized that incredible, that horrible living irony: a man believed dead being present, unconscious of the cause, alas! but in flesh and blood, at the inauguration of his own image, the glorification of his memory!

"It is terrible," Cécile repeated, as she had said just before.

The blind wife answered:

"I do not know of any torture more cruel, and yet more sweet. When those musicians were playing, there was a moment when I said to myself: 'At last they are doing him justice!' Then: 'But he does not understand, he does not know it. He is there without being there!' And again: 'It is I, perhaps it is I, who am the cause of this horror! It is for me that he used his brain, found madness, sought suicide, met that death which leaves him alive!' "

And as the relatives who have just lost some dear one lead you to the deathbed, Marthe asked:

"Do you want to see him?"

Cécile shuddered. What if this apparition should awaken in André one of his former attacks?

But Fortis's voice was calm, and Cécile was reassured when he said:

"Yes, I should like to cry 'thank you' to him once more."

Leaning on Anna's arm, the blind woman then went to a door and opened it.

Jean Klipper was still standing at the window, his face against the panes, looking—at what?—the slab, the bust, the street, the passers-by, seeing nothing, thinking of nothing.

Marthe called him:

"Jean!"

He turned mechanically at the sweet, familiar tones, and André and his wife advancing toward him, he bowed to them, bowed without recognizing them, his lips uttering guttural sounds.

"Yours with all our gratitude, Doctor!"

It was André who spoke, deeply agitated and grave.

The old man, pushing aside the long hair that fell over his forehead, looked at him with his dull eyes. Ah! where was the clear, penetrating glance of former days?

"It is I, Doctor! I, André Fortis! Fortis whom you cured, saved—"

The old man's lips tried to repeat the name. Nothing issued from them but incomprehensible syllables: "An—An—Fo—For—"

"You see," said Marthe, in her faint, trembling voice.

Then Cécile, kneeling before this man—brain vacant, great heart gone—took the thin hand with the prominent veins that Jean Klipper let fall by his side, and gently raised it to her lips, gazing through her tears at the genius who was now only an inert, mindless being, and said to the unfortunate man lost in darkness, drowned as if in a sea:

"May your great name be blessed, you who have sacrificed yourself for others!"

But Klipper withdrew his hand like a frightened child, and looked at this kneeling woman as if she might have wished to harm him—then, still active, he ran to Marthe and sought shelter in her arms, bewildered, terrified by the presence of these strangers whom he did not recognize.

The spectacle was too cruel. Never, perhaps, had the savage irony of Nature invented a more atrocious torture, and it seemed as if, irritated and implacable, she were avenging herself upon the human being who had sought to conquer her. She struck at the brain, as the executioner at the head, the trained assassin at the heart.

"Let us go!" said André Fortis, with a choking sensation in his throat.

"Let us go," said Cécile.

She kissed on the brow, upon the red stigmata of Klipper's experiments, poor Marthe, who again repeated:

"You will say nothing?"

"Nothing."

"To no one?"

"To no one."

"You will swear it?"

"We will swear it to you, Madame."

And they left the little house. Marthe and Klipper were going to leave to return to the Montrouge boarding house of "Monsieur and Madame Durand" —the martyr and the man of genius, the two vanquished ones united in a common sorrow.

People were still standing in front of the old birthplace, gazing at the bust of the child of Strassburg whom Paris, great Paris, had christened "great man."

"Dr. Chardin and his former patient were talking of the man whose bust had just been *inaugurated.*"

XVIII

AND LIFE GOES ON

THAT evening, in the train that was carrying them into France—and they shook their heads while repeating the words *"into France"*—Dr. Chardin and his former patient were talking of the man whose bust had just been *inaugurated,* of the incidents and emotions of the day, while through the windows vague landscapes, stations, cities flitted past—and Chardin repeated in a less formal manner of expression what he had stated more academically that morning in his official speech:

"Really, I do not know of a more amazing brain than this Klipper's. He had genius. I said truly, and I repeat it, genius!"

"Then, if he had lived, Doctor?"

"He would have astounded us all by his discoveries. People will return to his third eye, you will see, and who knows? perhaps some day Klipper will be hailed by the name of Klipper the Cyclops! Ah! that marvelous brain! Admirably organized, solid, imperturbable. It is not he, ah! no, not he, who

would have been attacked by the famous modern neurosis!''

Cécile and André exchanged a look under the electric light of the car.

''Then,'' said André, ''there are brains which the disease never attacks.''

''Oh! never is a word that belongs to no language,'' replied the scientist. ''But Klipper was one of those persons who crush illness, and do not even know it! See the difference! I relieved, he has cured you! A genius, I repeat, a genius! And what, alas! is the end of this genius?''

''Science has its hostages,'' replied André. ''He was one of them. Pshaw! Paris awaits us, and we, too, are hostages of toil. *'To arms!'* as Julien Sorel said.''

. . . . . .

While the train was rolling on, the artist was thinking of the works to be done, of all that life of joyous labor—of labor and also love which he had before him, and of that tomb at Saint-Laurent-du-Pont, where slept *The Other,* the being whom Jean Klipper had sealed there forever, like those vampires into whose hearts a sharp spear was thrust to prevent their reappearance.

(1)

THE END

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